

The book written by a group of scholars of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences, treats of the general trends of the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia after the Second World War. It discusses the complicated problems facing the peoples of Southeast Asia in their anti-imperialist struggle for freedom and independence. Devoted to the post-war history of the area, it makes a survey of the current problems confronting the countries of Southeast Asia in the economic and political fields.

southeast asia

HISTORY
ECONOMY
POLICY



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ЮГО-ВОСТОЧНАЯ АЗИЯ

(История, экономика, политика)

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Под редакцией

В. А. Жарова, Э. Х. Кямилева, В. А. Тюрина

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INTRODUCTION

The confrontation of the forces of socialism and capitalism, progress and reaction has intensified and spread to all parts of the world and all spheres of public life—economic, political, ideological and cultural. The world has entered the historical epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism, and socialism, having fully asserted itself in one-third of the world, is registering ever greater gains. Imperialism, though it has suffered a series of defeats, is still a source of danger to the cause of peace and social progress: it is endeavouring to weaken socialism's positions, to crush the national liberation movement and frustrate the working people's struggle for their vital interests in the capitalist countries.

In the new historical situation characterised by a general crisis of capitalism, a very important role is played by the joint struggle waged by the three principal contemporary anti-imperialist forces: the world socialist system, the international working class

and the national liberation movement. The decisive force in the anti-imperialist struggle is the world socialist system which has undermined the foundations of capitalism and gives powerful support to any genuine liberation movement.

The rapid growth of the national liberation struggle in the post-war years caused the collapse of the colonial system. The historical importance of this is only second to the rise of the world socialist system.

The emergence of new national states in Asia and Africa has led to serious changes in the world's political structure. Today, besides taking measures to consolidate their political independence and uphold their sovereignty, the developing countries are effecting far-reaching socio-economic reforms, enabling them to shift to the road of non-capitalist development, cast off their economic dependence on imperialism, surmount age-old economic backwardness and raise living standards.

The common features of the post-war national liberation movement most vividly unfolded in Southeast Asia. These features and the specific conditions obtaining in this region, which for long has been one of the world's "hot" spots, are examined by the authors of this book who recount the history (primarily the post-war history) of the Southeast Asian countries and throw light on their economic and political problems. This introductory chapter merely gives a brief outline of some aspects and events of the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia and discloses the causes of the complexity of the situation and of the intensity of the Southeast Asian peoples' struggle against imperialism for their freedom and independence.

This huge region was once a colonial possession of the world's largest imperialist powers, and for many years an arena where the interests of the USA, Britain, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal clashed.

The great scope of the national liberation struggle in Southeast Asia led to a withdrawal of the old colonial powers, the Netherlands, France and Britain, from that part of the world and the formation of independent national states. From the point of view of the imperialists Southeast Asia became a vacuum and the stronger imperialist powers—the USA, West Germany and Japan—rushed there to fill it. But, in time, the old colonial powers returned to Southeast Asia, and, in pursuit of the selfsame imperialist objectives, began to establish relations with their former colonies along new, neo-colonialist lines. These powers had a good knowledge of the economic conditions in these countries—whose natural wealth they had exploited for decades—and had preserved well-organised commercial ties there. All this resulted in an intensification of imperialist rivalry. To this day the vast natural wealth of Southeast Asia, its practically unlimited manpower resources and its important strategic position, are a magnet for the imperialists.

The Southeast Asian peoples are fighting resolutely against imperialist expansion, while the imperialists are searching for new forms and methods of neo-colonialist penetration. Hence the acute and intense struggle in this region.

Since their levels of socio-economic and political development vary, each of the Southeast Asian countries has its own different problems. The way in which they have solved or are solving their basic problem—liberation from imperialism—

varies with local conditions. So the history, the experience and the lessons of the development of Southeast Asia are highly instructive for the peoples of other developing countries. They help better to understand the laws of historical process, the peculiarities of the current development of the national liberation movement, and the possibilities of co-operation between various political forces in a single anti-imperialist front.

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Southeast Asia lies on either side of the equator and almost wholly within the torrid zone. It has abundant precipitation, high temperatures, and extremely luxurious and variegated vegetation. More than 60 per cent of the region is forest, and valuable species of trees are one of its main riches.

Favourable natural conditions—an abundance of warmth and moisture and fertile alluvial and lateric soils—make it possible to grow a diversity of crops and to collect two and even three harvests a year. The main food crop is rice. Corn, sweet potatoes, soya beans, peanuts, bananas and various tropical fruits are also cultivated. An important part in the economies of most Southeast Asian countries is played by export crops: hevea (90 per cent of the world natural rubber output), coconut palms (90 per cent of the world copra production), sugar cane, tobacco, Manila hemp, coffee, cocoa, oil and sago palms, cinchona, clove and musk trees. Livestock breeding is only developed in some parts of Southeast Asia.

The mineral resources are vast, but only an insignificant part has been prospected. The most important mineral raw materials are oil—there

are large deposits in Indonesia and Burma—and tin and tungsten ores whose deposits in Malaysia, on the Indonesian islands of Banka and Billiton, in the eastern regions of Burma and in Thailand are of world importance. There are also coal, iron, silver-lead and zinc ores, chromites, gold and precious stones.

The total population of Southeast Asia was estimated at about 250 million in 1965, more than 124 million in Indonesia, 35 million in Vietnam, 37 million in the Philippines, 34,7 million in Thailand and 28,2 million in Burma. The ethnic composition is motley and all Southeast Asian countries are multinational.

The Malayo-Polynesian people who make up more than half the region's population are in the majority in Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia. The second largest ethnic group are the Sino-Tibetan people, living in Burma, Thailand, Vietnam and Laos. The third largest language group are the Mon-Khmer races of the Indochina Peninsula, most numerous are the Khmers, who make up the majority of the Cambodian population.

Involved ethnic processes are taking place in Southeast Asia. In some countries the process of national consolidation takes place along the lines of promoting the unity of the bigger nationalities, which are joined by the smaller related ones. Other countries are undergoing what may be described as a statewide consolidation of all peoples into a single nation.

In all countries of the region some non-indigenous nationalities, primarily Chinese and Indians play an important part. There is a particularly large number of Chinese in Singapore (over 76 per cent of the population), Malaysia and Thai-

land. A considerable proportion of the Chinese are the working class, but there is also a fair number of Chinese traders, industrialists, bankers, and moneylenders. In other words the Chinese make up a considerable part of the wealthy and middle bourgeoisie. There are fewer Indians, and they live mainly in Malaysia, Singapore and Burma.

The majority of the Southeast Asian population live in villages, although in recent years the urban population, particularly in the bigger towns, has been growing fast.

The numerous religions of the region still play an important part in the social and political life. The majority of the population in Indonesia and Malaysia and a considerable portion of the population of the Philippines profess Islam, and the dominant religion in the countries of the Indochina Peninsula is Buddhism. Buddhism is the main religion in Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia and has many followers in Vietnam. Christianity penetrated Southeast Asia with the European colonists. Most of the Filipinos are Roman Catholics.

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The peoples of Southeast Asia have had a long and eventful history. For centuries there were powerful states, a highly developed civilisation and an original culture in that part of the world.

The grim pictures of the colonial period are still fresh in the memory of the Southeast Asian peoples. Asserting their domination with blood and sword the European colonialists plundered and exploited the countries of Southeast Asia for nearly four centuries.

The first to invade the region were the Portuguese who seized the large port of Malacca in 1511 and destroyed the Sultanate of Malacca, one of the biggest Southeast Asian states at the time. Then, in their quest for spices, they penetrated into the Moluccas. Spain conquered the Philippines in the sixties and seventies of the 16th century, and the Dutch and British colonialists arrived in the 17th century.

For two centuries the Netherlands waged wars of conquest on the Malay Archipelago, and established a colonial empire in Indonesia, the Netherlands East Indies.

At the close of the 18th century Britain asserted her presence in Malaya, and, in the course of the 19th century, seized the whole of Malaya and North Kalimantan (Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah). And towards the end of the 19th century, after three colonial wars, she subjected Burma.

France, too, joined in the colonial plunder. In 1860-90 she seized Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, turning them into colony called French Indochina.

As a result of the Spanish-American war of 1898 (the first imperialist war for the repartitioning of the already partitioned world) American imperialists made the Philippines their colony.

Siam (Thailand) was the only state in Southeast Asia which kept its independence. But in fact Siam became a semi-colony owing her formal independence to the rivalry between the British and French. Colonial powers imposed fettering treaties on Siam, making her independence mythical.

Colonial enslavement retarded the independent development of the Southeast Asian countries for a long time. The region became a major supplier of agricultural produce and useful minerals, and

a very important capital investment sphere for the imperialist states. Imperialist plunder, the rapacious pumping out of the natural wealth and the hideous exploitation of the local population doomed the peoples of the Southeast Asian countries to poverty and backwardness. Pursuing their selfish interests the imperialists kept feudal relations and their survivals alive, retarding the development of these extremely wealthy countries to a still greater extent.

The rule of the colonialists gave rise to the resistance of the Southeast Asian peoples.

In the 17th and 18th centuries there were constant uprisings against the Dutch colonialists in Indonesia, especially in Java. The anti-Dutch movement reached its height in the 19th century. For five years, from 1825 to 1830, Javanese peasants led by Diponegoro fought against the Dutch, directly threatening their rule in Indonesia. Two powerful anti-colonial movements, the Padri War of 1820-30 and the Atjeh War (end of the 19th-beginning of the 20th century) shook Sumatra.

In the seventies and nineties of the 19th century two large-scale insurrections flared up against the British colonialists in Malaya.

The peoples of Vietnam and Cambodia put up a heroic resistance against the invading French colonialists and waged a guerilla war in the eighties and nineties.

The guerilla war of the Burmese people, which began in the 1850s developed into a powerful anti-colonial movement. Following the seizure of the whole country by the British colonialists in 1885 it grew into a broad popular movement which it took 10 years to crush.

The first national liberation revolution in Southeast Asia took place in the Philippines from

1896 to 1898. It resulted in the expulsion of the Spanish colonialists and the proclamation of the Republic of the Philippines. But in 1902 US imperialists seized the Philippines and routed the republic.

The advent of the epoch of imperialism has radically changed the nature of the national liberation movement in the Southeast Asian countries. New classes, the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie emerged and took a leading part in the anti-colonial struggle. After the first Russian revolution of 1905-07, which, according to Lenin, "finally aroused Asia",* political parties and organisations whose policy was the struggle against foreign oppression began to appear in the region.

But it was only after the October Socialist Revolution in Russia, which dealt a powerful blow at the colonial system of imperialism and inspired the peoples of the East to fight for national liberation, that the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia and in other Asian and African countries assumed truly great proportions.

The rise of the Communist Parties which rallied the progressive forces of the colonies was of tremendous significance for the development of the national liberation movement in the Southeast Asian countries. The Indonesian Communist Party was founded in 1920, the Communist Parties of Indochina, Malaya and the Philippines in 1930, the Communist Party of Burma in 1939 and the Communist Party of Thailand in 1942. In the 1920s and 1930s, a powerful wave of anti-colonial movements swept across a number of Southeast Asian countries. The working class, whose ranks

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 19, p. 86.

had increased in these years, played a considerable part in it.

In some of the countries united trade union, peasant, youth and women's organisations were set up under the guidance of the Communists. The strikes in Malaya and Burma, the national uprising in Indonesia in 1926-27, the peasant movement in Vietnam and the Philippines, the bourgeois revolution in Thailand in 1932 and other anti-colonial battles signified the appearance of new trends in Southeast Asia, engendered by the crisis of the colonial system that followed the October Socialist Revolution in Russia.

The Southeast Asian peoples' struggle for national liberation during the period between the October Socialist Revolution and the Second World War showed the increasing political activity of the working class and its vanguard—the Communist Parties.

The historic victory of the Soviet Union over nazi Germany and the defeat of militarist Japan which altered the international situation in favour of the forces of socialism, peace and progress played a major part in the development of the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia. The Communist Parties of the Southeast Asian countries made a tremendous contribution to the cause of national liberation.

During the Second World War nearly the whole of Southeast Asia was occupied by Japanese troops, and turned into a colony of the Japanese imperialists, who, using the slogan "Asia for the Asians", posed as deliverers of the Southeast Asian peoples from the colonial yoke of the Western powers. This war resulted in tremendous changes in Southeast Asia which directly influenced its post-war history.

The Western powers surrendered their colonies in Southeast Asia to the Japanese practically without a fight. And it was the Southeast Asian peoples, guided by progressive forces, among which the Communists played the most important role, who launched the battle against their new imperialist oppressors. The activities of the forces of resistance led to the formation of united anti-Japanese national fronts and the liberation armies. The United National Front of Vietnam (Viet-minh) was founded in 1941. 1942 saw the foundation of the People's Army against Japan (Hukbalahap) in the Philippines and of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army. In 1943, the Free Thai Movement was launched in Thailand and in 1944 the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League was formed in Burma. The patriotic forces launched an extensive guerilla war against the Japanese invaders, which became particularly intense following the rout of nazi Germany and the Soviet Union's entry into the war against Japan. By the time the US forces landed in the Philippines (at the beginning of 1945), the Hukbalahap had already freed the greater part of Luzon, the largest of the Philippine islands. In 1945, large areas of Malaya were liberated; in March 1945, the National Army of Burma led by the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League organised an uprising against the Japanese invaders, and in August 1945, patriotic forces seized power in Indonesia and Vietnam.

So the anti-fascist struggle drew millions of people into vigorous political activity, dispelled the myth of the invincibility of the colonialists and stimulated the confidence of the masses. The working class and the Communist Parties grew

much stronger and the local bourgeoisie acquired greater political experience.

An important political outcome of the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia during the Second World War was the development of the struggle against the Japanese "new order" into a fight against all colonial oppression. This became clear when the patriotic organisations and national armed forces turned against the old colonialists when they returned to Southeast Asia after the expulsion of the Japanese. A period of national liberation revolutions began.

The emergence of a number of independent states at the end of the Second World War or immediately after it was a characteristic of the post-war development in Southeast Asia. Having matured in the struggle against Japanese imperialism, the liberation forces in these countries managed, in a short time, to establish their own statehood and, upon the return of the Western colonialists, presented them with a *fait accompli*. The August Revolution of 1945 in Vietnam resulted in the establishment of an independent people's democratic state, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. It was in Vietnam that for the first time in the history of the colonial and semi-colonial countries of the East, the working class carried out an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution and established popular rule. On August 17, 1945, Indonesia proclaimed her independence and cast off the 350-year-old colonial domination. As a result of a hard-fought struggle, waged by the peoples of Burma against British colonialists, Burma in January 1948, proclaimed her independence. In July 1946, the United States was forced to grant independence to the Philippines.

The emergence of sovereign states in Southeast

Asia and the further growth of the national liberation movement frightened the imperialists, who tried to destroy the young states or to make their independence fictitious. With this aim in view, they decided to strike the main blow at the liberation movement in the countries where Communists and other Left-wing forces had a considerable influence (Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaya). Supported by the British and US imperialists, the Dutch colonialists conducted a war against the Indonesian Republic from 1946 to 1949. But the colonialists failed to put down the Indonesian revolution and in 1956 Indonesia abrogated the fettering agreements that the Netherlands had imposed on her in 1945.

The imperialists' efforts to preserve their domination in the countries of Indochina were also unsuccessful. France's intervention against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam precipitated a nation-wide guerilla war, in which not only the Vietnamese people, but the peoples of Laos and Cambodia rose up in arms against the French colonialists.

In the historic battle of Dien Bien Phu in March 1954 the French troops had to fight on two fronts—against the patriots of Vietnam and of Laos. Defeated, the French Government was forced to seek a peaceful solution to the Indochina problem. On the initiative of the Soviet Union, in April 1954, the Geneva conference was held of the foreign ministers of the five Great Powers, Britain, the Chinese People's Republic, the USSR, France, the USA, and also the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and representatives of the Saigon Administration which put an end to the war in Indochina and confirmed the independence of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

In 1948, the British imperialists launched a war against the Left-wing forces in Malaya who had united into the Malayan National Liberation Army, and in the Philippines the local reactionaries, with the military and economic support of the USA, mounted an offensive against the patriotic National Liberation Army (Hukbong).

The developments in the first post-war decade showed that all attempts to re-establish colonial regimes in Southeast Asia were doomed to failure. In view of the mounting national liberation movement the British imperialists made an effort to retain at least some of their positions. They agreed to make concessions and in 1957 granted independence to Malaya.

In 1963, the Federation of Malaysia was formed consisting of Malaya, Singapore and the former British colonies in North Kalimantan—Sarawak and Sabah. In 1965, Singapore withdrew from the Federation and became an independent state.

By the mid-fifties a new situation had taken shape in Southeast Asia. The collapse of the colonial system became a fact. The victory of the peoples of Indochina and the rise of independent states—the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, the coming to power of the progressive government of Ali Sastroamidjojo in Indonesia, and the increased solidarity in the struggle against imperialist pressure culminated in the historic Bandung Conference of 29 Asian and African countries in April 1955. By condemning colonialism, and the policy and practice of racial segregation and discrimination, the Conference contributed to the national awareness of the peoples of Asia and Africa, and to the further development of the anti-colonial national liberation

movement. All of this showed the failure of imperialism's old political course.

In these conditions international imperialism decided to put its biggest stakes on local bourgeois-landowner regimes, orientated on the political and economic patronage of the USA and other capitalist countries, and on the military blocs.

In pursuance of their aggressive policy a military-political bloc, SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation), was set up. Its founders, the imperialists of the United States and Britain, underlined that the bloc's main task was to fight against the national liberation movement and communism in Southeast Asia. The bloc's membership included the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand. Nothing came of the attempts to get other Asian countries—India, Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia and Cambodia, to join the bloc.

In the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, US imperialism, the principal enemy of the peoples of Southeast Asia, carried on with its attempts to put down the national liberation revolutions by force of arms. But, since the re-establishment of the colonial regimes in Southeast Asian countries was completely out of the question, the object of imperialist aggression was to support Right-wing reactionary forces who were wholly dependent on US imperialism. In 1956, for example, the United States wrecked the implementation of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Indochina by separating South Vietnam from the rest of the country, and in 1961 started a war against the Vietnamese patriots fighting for the country's reunification and liberation. In 1959, internal reactionaries closely tied up with the USA, insti-

gated a civil war in Laos, in which the USA and other SEATO member countries actively interfered. In 1957 and 1958, this bloc vigorously backed the reactionary mutinies which flared up in Sumatra and the eastern regions of Indonesia.

Weakened by the struggle of the Southeast Asian peoples for independence and the conflicts of interest between its members, SEATO proved to be of little effectiveness. France and Pakistan largely withdrew from its activities and the other Asian countries showed no desire to join.

In the sixties the imperialist policy in Southeast Asia became more cautious and veiled, particularly in connection with the all too evident failure of the US aggression in Vietnam. Nonetheless, imperialism is endeavouring to unite the countries of the region into unions in which the leading role would be assigned to pro-imperialist states, or to those directly sustained by imperialism, such as South Korea and South Vietnam. Thus, in June 1966, the Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC) was formed in Seoul with Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, South Korea, South Vietnam and Taiwan as its members. Although the professed purpose of the Council is promotion of economic and cultural co-operation, in effect it adheres to anti-communist positions and endeavours to weaken the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia. Imperialism is continuing its efforts to seize control of another regional organisation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations which includes Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines, although officially this association was set up to promote economic and cultural co-operation.

In view of the worsening situation in Southeast Asia and US President Nixon's Guam Doctrine, advanced in June 1969, to make Asians fight Asians, the imperialists' designs are pregnant with great danger. The United States is particularly concerned with knocking together a bloc of Asian countries as an instrument for crushing the national liberation movements. Britain is taking an active part in these plans. In April 1971, it proclaimed the establishment of a military group consisting of Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore. The Conservative Government in Britain intends to restore the military presence of British imperialism in Southeast Asia. This is being done in the spirit of the Guam Doctrine and enables Britain to preserve its role as leader and to obtain a legal basis for its interference in the affairs of the Southeast Asian countries.

"The Guam Doctrine," according to Professor M. Kapitsa, "is an attempt to find such ways and forms of US policy, which would make it possible to cut US moral and material losses; at the same time it is intended to camouflage the imperialist policy of the United States."*

Today it is obvious that the Guam Doctrine does not alter the substance of US imperialism, which has not ceased to play the role of world gendarme and suppressor of national liberation movements. Despite the much publicised pronouncements by US statesmen concerning the withdrawal of US forces from Vietnam, they are still there and conducting military operations. Moreover, in their hopes for a military victory in South Vietnam, Nixon and his supporters have spread the aggressive war to Cambodia and have

* *Za Rubezhom*, Moscow, No. 22 (519), 1970, p. 12.

intensified the "special war" in Laos. This has precipitated a war of resistance which is being fought by the peoples of these three countries in close co-operation. Picked units of the Saigon army have been smashed by the patriotic forces of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Nixon's plan to use puppet troops instead of US soldiers fell through and the USA became still more deeply involved in its Indochina gamble. US imperialism remains the main enemy of the national liberation movement and the principal threat to the security of that part of the world.

The movement for putting an end to the US imperialist aggression in Indochina, for the withdrawal of all the US and allied troops, and for the assurance to the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia of their legitimate right to be masters of their own country, is gaining momentum in the world, even in the United States. The Soviet Union is giving tremendous assistance and support to the Vietnamese people and to the Laotian and Cambodian patriots. This support was expressed in the Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in the Congress Resolution on the Report, in the speeches of delegates and guests and in the Congress's Appeal "Freedom and Peace for the Peoples of Indochina". "The tenacity and courage of the freedom-loving peoples of Indo-China, augmented by the unfailing support of the Soviet people, the peoples of the other socialist countries, the world communist movement and all other progressive forces, are the guarantee of their victory over the enemy," says the Appeal.*

* *Documents of the 24th Congress of the CPSU*, Moscow, 1971, pp. 302-03, Russ. ed.

Today, the social aspect of the national liberation revolutions in Southeast Asian countries is gaining in importance. "A national liberation revolution does not end with the winning of political independence," states the Programme of the CPSU. "Independence will be unstable and will become fictitious unless the revolution brings about radical changes in the social and economic spheres and solves the pressing problems of national rebirth."^{*}

The newly-free nations of Southeast Asia are confronted with the fundamental problem: which road to follow to cast off their dependence on the imperialist system and to overcome their age-old backwardness.

This problem has been solved in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Having chosen the road of socialist development, it has not only attained full political independence, but has also effected far-reaching democratic reforms, has destroyed the economic and political foundations of imperialist and feudal domination and the exploitation of man by man.

"Under the impact of the revolutionary conditions of our time," says the Main Document—"Tasks at the Present Stage of the Struggle Against Imperialism and United Action of the Communist and Workers' Parties and All Anti-Imperialist Forces"—adopted at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow on June 17, 1969, "distinctive forms of progressive social development of the newly-free countries have appeared, and the role of revolutionary and democratic forces has been enhanced. Some young states have taken the non-capitalist

^{*} *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, p. 492.

path, a path which opens up the possibility of overcoming the backwardness inherited from the colonial past and creates conditions for transition to socialist development.”* It was this road that Burma took in March 1962.

The struggle for a progressive road of social development is gaining momentum in the countries of Southeast Asia. It is closely connected with social differentiation, the aggravation of the conflict between the working class, peasants and other democratic sections of the population (including the patriotic sections of the petty-bourgeoisie), on the one hand, and internal reaction, on the other, this struggle is also spearheaded against those elements of the national bourgeoisie who are more and more inclined to make a deal with imperialism.

The Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union says that “*the struggle for national liberation in many countries has in practical terms begun to grow into a struggle against exploitative relations, both feudal and capitalist*”.** Moving into the forefront of this struggle are Communist and revolutionary-democratic parties whose cooperation fully meets the interests of the anti-imperialist movement, the strengthening of national independence and the cause of social progress. The exacerbation of social contradictions has become a characteristic feature in the development of the countries of Southeast Asia in the course of the last decade.

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties*, Prague, 1969, p. 28.

** *Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Novosti Press Publishing House, Moscow, 1971, p. 30.

In their struggle the progressive forces of Southeast Asia are meeting serious obstacles. The main obstacles to the national liberation revolutions are: the imperialists, who still hold important positions in the economies of some Southeast Asian countries and influence their policies, and internal reaction which relies on imperialist support.

In recent years the situation in Southeast Asia has been growing more involved as a result of the active interference of the Chinese People's Republic in the internal affairs of the countries in this part of the world. The activity of the Chinese People's Republic is developing in line with the general policy of the present Chinese leadership, and at the same time takes into account features that are peculiar to this part of the world.

The petty-bourgeois chauvinistic ideology of Mao Tse-tung and his group is the theoretical foundation for their striving for hegemony in the international communist and the national liberation struggle. The Maoists want to turn China into a world power capable of foisting its will on other states. They oppose any relaxation of international tension. Chinese propaganda portrays any attempt to reach a political settlement of controversial international issues as a "plot of two super-powers". The Maoists would have liked to incite a military conflict between the USA and the USSR, while they stay in the wings. They are not interested in the fact that the Soviet Union is a great socialist state and was founded by Lenin. Moreover, by attacking and slandering the USSR, its Government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Peking intends to wean the developing countries away from the socialist community, isolate them and turn them into instruments of its policy.

In pursuing their great-power policy, the Maoists are resorting to extreme demagoguery and opportunism. Under cover of revolutionary phrases they blackmail and incite countries against each other and, when it is to their advantage, they enter into unprincipled co-operation with imperialism and betray the interests of their own people, as in the case of Hongkong or Macao.

Southeast Asia is China's closest neighbour and the present Chinese leaders regard it as within their sphere of influence where, once their positions are consolidated, they would be able to implement their hegemonic plans. Pursuing their great-power policy, the Maoists disregard the needs and aspirations of the masses and the interests of the Southeast Asian countries. Foisting the "thought of Mao Tse-tung" and calling for a blind imitation of the "Chinese experience" of the national liberation struggle, they are conducting intensive nationalistic propaganda and spreading the idea of the need to set up a special Asian commonwealth. By constantly aggravating tension, by trying artificially to frame the maturing of a revolutionary situation in that area and by indulging in adventurism, the Peking rulers hit hard at the revolutionary movement in Southeast Asia. The world has not forgotten the tragic events in Indonesia where an attempt was made to put the "thought of Mao Tse-tung" into practice. No less grievous was the experience of the Communist Party of Burma, whose leadership, following in the wake of Mao Tse-tung's policy, launched a "cultural revolution" in the Party which in effect amounted to the annihilation of all members who opposed the anti-national pro-Peking policy. Peking also tried to launch the Hungweiping movement among the Chinese popu-

lation in Cambodia. As a result, the Cambodian reactionaries took advantage of "the Chinese threat" to seek a rapprochement with the United States, which among other factors helped pave the way for US interference into Cambodia's internal affairs.

The ideological and political crisis which has gripped Maoism in Southeast Asia is growing. Broad sections of the population, on the basis of their own experience, are becoming convinced of the correctness of the course followed by the international communist movement, and that is an important objective pre-condition for the revival of the revolutionary movement in Southeast Asia on a genuinely Marxist-Leninist foundation.

It is easy, therefore, to understand why the Southeast Asian peoples view the Chinese leadership with distrust. At the same time, the Soviet foreign policy which rests on genuine internationalism, upholds the interests of the masses and of peace and security in that part of the world, and encourages independent and progressive development of the Southeast Asian countries in every way, enjoys the respect and trust of the most diverse public circles, including many of those whose ideology is far removed from the Marxist world outlook.

The Soviet Union builds its relations with the Southeast Asian countries on the basis of the fraternal assistance and solidarity with the national liberation movement. The peoples of Southeast Asia regard the world's first socialist country as their true ally in the struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism, and as a reliable defender of their national sovereignty.

For a quarter of a century now Southeast Asia has attracted the attention of the world public. During this period its peoples have solved many problems. But the struggle does not abate and many issues are still awaiting solution. US imperialism has heightened its activity in the region. Yet there is no doubt that the peoples of Southeast Asia will consolidate their national sovereign states and build a new life, even though the struggle for these objectives will be prolonged and bitter.

INVINCIBLE VIETNAM

For a quarter of a century progressive people throughout the world have been following developments in Vietnam, a courageous country which is waging a grim and just struggle against imperialism. On September 2, 1945, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam Hanoi heard President Ho Chi Minh read out the Declaration of Independence, and millions of Vietnamese repeated the concluding lines of this historic document as an oath: "The entire Vietnamese people are determined to mobilise all their physical and mental strength, to sacrifice their lives and property in order to safeguard their independence and liberty."*

Refusing to reconcile itself with the loss of a rich colony which took to the revolutionary road and smashed the chains of slavery and ignorance, international imperialism plunged into a dirty war against free Vietnam. The Vietnamese people's first war of resistance lasted for nine grim years and culminated in a magnificent victory at Dien Bien Phu and the conclusion, in the summer of 1954, of the Geneva Agreements on Indochina in

* *Breaking Our Chains. Documents of the Vietnamese Revolution of August 1945*, Hanoi, 1960, p. 97.

which the historical rights of the Vietnamese people were recognised.

That summer North Vietnam launched the rehabilitation and development of national economy, the introduction of far-reaching revolutionary reforms in all spheres of national activity and the building of socialism. Once again the Democratic Republic of Vietnam vividly demonstrated to the newly-free countries the enormous advantages of genuine people's rule over the rule of exploiters, directly or indirectly dependent on the colonialists, and inspired them with its revolutionary experience.

The United States wrecked the implementation of the Geneva Agreements, turned South Vietnam into its private domain, a base for aggression in Southeast Asia and a hotbed of tension in the Far East and in the whole world. Hostile to the Vietnamese people's legitimate aspirations for unity, freedom and the independence of their country, the US imperialists launched a criminal aggression against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, imperialism's second dirty war in Indochina. But once again the Vietnamese people rebuffed the enemy.

What is the source of the strength of the heroic Vietnamese people and what is the basis of their achievements in the fight for freedom and the building of a new life? To answer this question it is necessary to examine each stage of this heroic struggle, which is, with good reason, regarded as one of the greatest pages in the history of the world's national liberation movement.

*Thousands of Years
of Struggle
for Independence*

Vietnam is a country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia. In the north Vietnam has a common border with China, over 1,000-kilometre long, and in the west and the south-west it borders on Laos and Cambodia. In the east and south it is washed by the waters of the Gulf of Tonkin, the Gulf of Siam and the South China Sea.

Vietnam has an area of 330,000 square kilometres and its population, which increases annually by about 3-3.5 per cent, is estimated at 35 million.

The country lies in the torrid zone and in the southern monsoon belt. The climate is characterised by a periodic change of winds, alternating wet and dry seasons and high mean annual temperatures.

Vietnam has luxurious tropical vegetation and favourable conditions for cultivating even the most capricious southern crops. There are two and sometimes even three rice harvests a year. The extensive area of mountains and uplands is covered by dense tropical forests with valuable species of trees. The country's jungles and waters abound in animals and fishes, and there are rich mineral deposits, particularly in the north. The deep rivers and numerous mountain springs could be made into a major source of electricity.

The Vietnamese people have inherited an ancient and highly-developed civilisation. Their forebears from time immemorial inhabited the lower reaches of the Yangtze River. Giving way to the pressure of the Chinese tribes, in 400-300

B.C., the ancient Vietnamese moved to Indochina where they established the Southern State, Vietnam. In the 3rd century B.C. Vietnam was conquered by China and for almost a thousand years fought against Chinese domination. In 939, Vietnam became independent, though invasions from the north continued for centuries afterwards. The invasions of Chinese armies in the 15th and 18th centuries were particularly devastating, and the Vietnamese had to mobilise their entire strength to repel them.

By that time Vietnam had developed into the most powerful state in Indochina, integrated territorially, economically, ethnically and having a common language.

Vietnam's vast natural resources and advantageous geographic position whetted the appetites of the European colonialists and by the beginning of the 1880s, after thirty years of resistance, the country was conquered by France.

With their usual policy of "divide and rule", the colonialists demolished the historically formed unity of Vietnam by splitting it up into three parts: Tonkin (northern part), Annam (central part) and Chochin-China (southern part). French capitalists seized all key positions in the economy of their colony in Indochina and doomed its working people to poverty, oppression and ignorance. For 80 years Vietnam disappeared from the political map.

The August Revolution and the Emergence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

Following the establishment of foreign domination, Vietnam turned into a scene of uprisings, peasant wars and mutinies, all of which, however, ended in failure.

The First World War engendered important social changes in Vietnam, and new classes, the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie, emerged on the historical scene. But they, too, were unaware of the right road, the road that could have led them to victory over the foreign oppressors, until the *Aurora* fired its historic salvo in Russia. "This revolutionary thunder," Ho Chi Minh subsequently wrote, "induced the Vietnamese patriots to turn their eyes towards the Soviet Union, to embrace the great Marxist-Leninist teaching and vigorously participate in the revolutionary struggle."*

The implementation of the ideas and the experience of the October Revolution had a great impact on the historical development of Vietnam. Relying on the international communist and working class movement, the best representatives of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement became unbending fighters for the freedom and happiness of their people. They mastered the Marxist-Leninist theory, creatively and under the guidance of the proletariat evolved the tactics for a revolutionary movement under the conditions of a colonial country. With the establishment (in

* Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Articles and Speeches*, Moscow, 1959, p. 4. Russ. ed.

1930) of the Communist Party of Indochina the masses acquired a reliable leader and steadfastly increased their participation in the political struggle. In the latter half of the thirties the slogans of struggle for independence advanced by the masses were supplemented by slogans of struggle against the threat of fascism and war.

During the Second World War there was a steady growth of socio-economic and political contradictions in Vietnam. In 1940, the Japanese imperialists "peacefully" occupied Vietnam after making a deal with the Vichy Government of France. The Vietnamese people's plight became still worse. In May 1941, the historical Eighth (enlarged) Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indochina prepared the establishment of the Vietnam Independence League, or the Vietminh, which united all patriotic forces in the country. A programme of action was worked out which took all aspects of the domestic and the international situation into account.

Vietnamese patriots, members of National Salvation Societies, which were part of the Vietminh, organised many campaigns of disobedience to the occupation authorities, meetings and demonstrations; at the same time illegal Vietminh organisations, operating in towns and villages, set up resistance bases. On December 22, 1944, the guerilla detachments were united to form the regular Vietnam Liberation Army, which was later renamed the Vietnam People's Army. In the summer of 1945, the Vietminh already controlled a very large area, with a population of over a million people, and had established organs of revolutionary authority there. The rout and capitulation of imperialist Japan was of great signifi-

cance for the people of Vietnam. In these circumstances the Communist Party of Indochina boldly took the country's destiny into its hands and at All-Vietnam Conference on August 13, 1945, decided to start a nation-wide insurrection.

The Vietnamese people responded to the impassioned appeals of the Communists. Popular uprisings led by the Vietminh resulted in the establishment of revolutionary authority in thousands of villages and towns. Newly-formed Liberation Army units were armed with weapons captured from the enemy. On August 16, 1945, the People's Congress of Vietnam was opened which established the Vietnamese National Liberation Committee and formulated the home and foreign policy of the people's power.

On August 19, the popular revolution won in Hanoi. On August 25, Emperor Bao Dai, a Japanese puppet, abdicated in Hue, the official capital of Vietnam. On that day the revolution swept victorious into Saigon in South Vietnam.

On August 28, the Vietnamese National Liberation Committee became the Provisional Government of Vietnam. On the decision of the People's Congress of Vietnam Ho Chi Minh, the tried fighter for the people's happiness, was appointed head of the Provisional Government and of the Republic.

On September 2, 1945, the great gains of the August Revolution—freedom, independence and unity of the country—were officially proclaimed in the historic Declaration of Independence. September 2 has become since then the national holiday of the Vietnamese people.

Nine Years of Resistance

The August Revolution established genuine democracy. On September 8, 1945, a decree was published establishing universal suffrage in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and new, genuinely popular organs of power were elected. People's councils and executive committees were elected in villages, towns and provinces, and Executive Committees of North, Central and South Vietnam were elected in the three big regions of the country.

On January 6, 1946, there were universal free elections to the National Assembly and the nation-wide supreme organ of state power was formed.

On March 2, 1946, the National Assembly elected the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam with President Ho Chi Minh at the head, and in November of the same year it adopted the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam consolidating the formation of a united independent state in Vietnam and the democratic freedoms and rights won by the people.

The strength and vitality of the popular rule became manifest in the very first days of the Republic, for it enjoyed the absolute support of the widest sections of the urban and rural population, who were freed from the oppression and horrors of colonial rule, and now became the masters of their own future. This strength and vitality was strikingly embodied in extensive reforms in the socio-economic and cultural spheres, and in the heroic struggle against imperialist intrigues and aggression.

On September 9, 1945, British and French occupation forces landed in South Vietnam. They refused to have anything to do with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and therefore encountered the resistance of the population of the south which rose up in defence of popular rule.

In the meantime the north was invaded by 200,000 Chiang Kai Shek troops commanded by US advisers. In this extremely difficult situation the popular government mobilised all the forces of the people and displayed great flexibility in both domestic and foreign policy issues. Taking advantage of the contradictions in the imperialist camp, the Ho Chi Minh Government got the French authorities to sign a preliminary agreement on March 6, 1946, under which France recognised the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as a free state, and gained the withdrawal of the Chiang Kai Shek's troops. In the spring of 1946, British troops withdrew from South Vietnam fearing that the situation in their own colonies might deteriorate.

On September 14, 1946, after a hard-fought diplomatic battle the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and France signed another agreement—a *modus vivendi*. But in violation of this agreement, French imperialist circles on December 19, 1946, launched a large-scale aggressive war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. French troops seized Hanoi, Haiphong and other towns, and important lines of communications. The United States hurried to the assistance of the French invaders by increasing its arms deliveries and financial help. A puppet Vietnamese Government, headed by ex-emperor Bai Dao, was set up. In 1950, it was recognised by the USA and Britain,

who ignored the existence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Washington's envoys intensified their subversive activity in Vietnam, but their neo-colonialist manoeuvres failed to deceive the Vietnamese people. On March 19, 1950, in protest against the arrival in the port of Saigon of two US naval ships, a general strike broke out in the city and the uninvited guests were forced to leave. Since then March 19 has been marked in Vietnam and throughout the world as Day of Struggle against US imperialist aggression in Vietnam. While waging the war of resistance, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam further strengthened its people's democratic system. In the latter half of 1950 the republican armed forces went over to large-scale offensive operations, which marked the turning point in the war. In February 1951, the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Indochina drew up a programme of further struggle for freedom and independence, and the building of a new life. Henceforth the party of the working class called itself the Working People's Party of Vietnam. On March 3, 1951, on the initiative of WPPV all the people's forces were consolidated in the Lien Viet United National Liberation Front. A veteran of the Vietnamese revolution, Ton Duc Thang was elected Chairman of its Standing Committee. On December 4, 1953, the Third Session of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam passed the Agrarian Reform Law which was to put into practice the slogan "the land belongs to those who till it". This new political course of people's power in the countryside evoked a tremendous response from millions of peasants, who stepped up their participation in the heroic resistance struggle, and strengthened the proletariat-led alliance

between the Vietnamese working class and the peasantry.

In January 1950, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was officially recognised by the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies and their assistance and support played a major role in Vietnam's victories. The international working class launched a consistent struggle of solidarity with fighting Vietnam under the slogan "Hands off Vietnam" which was joined by progressive forces throughout the world.

In December 1953, the People's Army encircled a major enemy force in the Dien Bien Phu Valley in North Vietnam. Offering France an opportunity to end her aggression without "loss of prestige", President Ho Chi Minh, in an interview with the Swedish *Expressen* in November 1953 said that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was ready for a peaceful settlement.

In January 1954, the colonialists launched a military operation in South Vietnam under the code-name Atlant to stop the liberation forces' offensive in the north. Richard Nixon, then Vice-President of the United States, arrived in Vietnam to see how the operation was developing and the US press carried reports that the USA was preparing a military invasion of Indochina for the purpose of "internationalising" the conflict and turning it into a "second Korean war". But the US military circles were unable to put through their plan at the time. The fall of Dien Bien Phu on May 7, 1954, marked the great victory of the Vietnamese people in the nine-year resistance war. On April 26, the foreign ministers of the five Great Powers, the USSR, the Chinese People's Republic, Britain, France, the USA, and also of the Demo-

cratic Republic of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and representatives of the Saigon Administration met in conference on the shore of Lake Geneva. The conference lasted over two months.

Supported by the USSR and other socialist countries the Democratic Republic of Vietnam achieved a splendid diplomatic victory in Geneva: on the night of July 20, the conference was concluded successfully with the adoption of the Agreements on the Cessation of Hostilities in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and the Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference.

A provisional demarcation line was established passing approximately through the geographic centre of the country, from the coast of the South China Sea to the Laotian border along the Ben Hai River (that is slightly south of 17°N). In defining it, Article 6 of the Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference stated clearly that "the military demarcation line is provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary".*

A demilitarised zone up to five kilometres wide was established on either side of the demarcation line and the forces of the warring sides were to regroup and withdraw to their own side of the line.

Article 7 of the Final Declaration stated that general elections should be held in July 1956 under the supervision of The International Supervision and Control Commission in Vietnam consisting of representatives of India, Canada and Poland, and that on July 20, 1955, competent representatives of both zones would commence con-

* *The 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam*, Lnd., 1965, pp. 24-25.

sultations to this effect. The Geneva Agreements banned the use of the territory of Indochina, particularly Vietnam, for aggressive purposes and the establishment of foreign military bases. Under the Agreements no foreign troops or military personnel and no arms and ammunition were to be brought into Vietnam. Both sides agreed that their zones would not adhere to any military alliance and would not be used for a resumption of military operations or for promoting aggressive policy.

The Final Declaration stated that the participants of the Geneva Conference would not interfere in the internal affairs of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and would respect their independence and sovereignty.

At the concluding session of the Geneva Conference, the US representatives, in defiance of the other participants and world public opinion, refused to sign the Final Declaration.

Violation of the Geneva Agreements

Already during the first "dirty war" it became clear that the United States intended to replace France in enforcing a colonial policy throughout Indochina. On January 12, 1950, US Secretary of State Dean Acheson officially announced that Indochina lay within the US defensive perimeter in the Far East. In December of the same year the United States in an obvious challenge to Paris concluded a so-called agreement on mutual defence and assistance with the feudal-compradore regime of Bao Dai. Soon a so-called US Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG),

which, in effect, became the US military headquarters in Indochina, began to function in Saigon.

It is not difficult to see why the US imperialist circles did not stop with the refusal to recognise the decision passed by a competent international conference. Their plan was to set up a government in Saigon obedient to Washington's dictate, perpetuate the division of the country and turn South Vietnam into their stronghold at the intersection of strategic communications in Southeast Asia. With this aim they enlisted the "services" of the head of a numerous feudal-theocratic family clan of Catholic Ngo Dinh Diem who had spent a number of years in the United States. Then they dealt a blow at one of the main provisions of the Geneva Agreements banning the adherence of the countries of Indochina to military blocs: in September 1954, the hastily knocked together aggressive SEATO bloc recorded in its documents (in an addenda to the main text) that South Vietnam lay within its sphere of operations.

In violation of the Geneva Agreements US military "aid", in the form of large consignments of arms and ammunition, began to flow into South Vietnam, and US officers and "specialists" began to build up the army, the police, the administration and the propaganda machinery.

On October 26, following the referendum of October 23, 1955, which took place in conditions of bloody terror, Ngo Dinh Diem deposed Bao Dai and proclaimed himself the head of the "State of Vietnam". After that he renamed the puppet state into the Republic of Vietnam. Formed with no less haste the "National Assembly" consisting of Diem's followers unanimously adopted the constitution drawn up by the dictator.

Thousands of millions of dollars were spent on "perfecting" this terrorist regime, designed to suppress the will of the South Vietnamese, who wanted to see the country united, free and happy, as did their compatriots in North Vietnam. Eleven different security services, organised under the guidance of overseas "experts", enmeshed South Vietnam in a grisly web. South Vietnam authorities banned mass political organisations and annulled the revolutionary gains of the Vietnamese people in all spheres of life. They doomed 15 million South Vietnamese to extreme poverty and ruin, virtually turning them into the slaves of US capital, which had got a grip of the entire South Vietnam economy. Hundreds of thousands of resistance fighters, who had fought for Vietnam's freedom, independence and unity, were thrown into prisons. By 1960, as a result of repressions, 200,000 patriots had been killed in South Vietnam, about 800,000 were wounded or crippled by torture and some 400,000 were languishing in more than a thousand prisons and concentration camps.

The terrible lot of the South Vietnamese population and the full depth of the national tragedy were particularly manifest against the background of the successes of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which had preserved and built on the gains of the August Revolution.

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam Builds Socialism

Ho Chi Minh pointed out at the Third Congress of the Working People's Party of Vietnam that "since the re-establishment of peace, the

North, completely liberated, has shifted over to the stage of socialist revolution".*

With peace re-established, the Working People's Party of Vietnam mobilised millions of people to build socialism and to fight for the peaceful unification of the country. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam became a country of genuine people's democracy, as is laid down in the Constitution of 1960.

Every citizen of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam enjoys full democratic rights and freedoms in all spheres of life—political, economic and cultural. The main guarantee of these rights and freedoms, written into the 1960 Constitution, is the state power exercised by the working people, with the working class and its Party at the head, the socialist ownership of the implements and means of production and the steadily developing national economy.

One of the most important principles of people's democracy in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is the genuine equality of its citizens regardless of sex, nationality, race or religion. All citizens are equal before the law; they have every opportunity to take part in the administration of the state, the formation and work of all state agencies, according to their personal qualities and abilities. At the same time an important aspect of people's rule is the equality of all national minorities, for besides the Vietnamese who make up 85 per cent of the population, there are 60 ethnic minorities totalling over 2,000,000 people. Following the establishment of peace, the people's power granted these nationalities autonomy in

* *Third National Congress of the Vietnam Workers' Party, Documents*, Vol. 1, Hanoi, s. d. p. 14.

the areas where they live and created all the political and economic prerequisites for the speediest abolition of backwardness, and their participation in all spheres of national activity.

Freedom of religious worship is recognised for all citizens. The state does not interfere in the affairs of religious communities, nor does it prohibit sermons and services in churches, pagodas and temples.

Under the Constitution women have equal rights with men in all spheres of activity.

The citizens of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam enjoy extensive socio-political rights and freedoms, the most important of which is the right to elect and to be elected to organs of state authority. Citizens are guaranteed freedom of speech, the press, assembly, freedom to unite in mass organisations and freedom of demonstrations.

Among the fundamental rights guaranteed by the 1960 Constitution the right to work, the right to rest and leisure, the right to medical aid and maintenance in case of sickness, the right to education, and the right to enjoy all the benefits of culture are of prime importance. That the regime in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is genuinely democratic is borne out by the existence of such institutions as inviolability of the person, home and property, and the privacy of correspondence.

The political unity of the peoples of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has found its expression in the Vietnam Fatherland Front founded in 1955. This organisation embraces all Vietnamese patriots, whatever their religious convictions, nationality, political views and social status, who support the ideas of unity, independence and democracy. The Fatherland Front consists of mil-

lions of Vietnamese who take an active part in the work of its agencies.

The Front's guiding force is the Working People's Party of Vietnam which has 1,500,000 members. The Socialist and Democratic Parties also play an important part in the Front's activities. Members of the Front include the Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions, the Union of the Working Youth (in 1970 this organisation was named after Ho Chi Minh), the Peasants' Union, the Federation of Vietnamese Women, associations of Catholics and Buddhists and other organisations.

Enjoying the support of the entire population, the Working People's Party of Vietnam organised planned economic and cultural construction which has made remarkable headway. By 1957, the national economy was restored to the pre-war level of 1939, and an agrarian reform had been carried out which turned over the land to those who tilled it: 2,104,000 peasant families received, free of charge, over 800,000 hectares of land, farm implements, grain, etc.

Towards the end of the rehabilitation period, the small-scale commodity production sector still played a large part in the economy. This sector accounted for 90 per cent of agricultural production, 57 per cent of industrial and handicrafts output and 24.5 per cent of the total retail trade in the private sector. A co-operative sector, consisting of 133 agricultural producers' co-operatives and 85,000 mutual labour assistance groups was formed, but the majority of the peasants were still engaged in the unproductive individual economy. This left ample room for the growth of the private-ownership ideology, the strengthening of the exploiter elements and undermining economic development. There were still several hundred thou-

sand craftsmen and artisans who had not united into co-operatives, and were dragging out a miserable existence. Tens of thousands of people were exploited at enterprises owned by the local bourgeoisie.

The working class and the Working People's Party of Vietnam scientifically substantiated and clearly defined the tasks and roads of further socio-economic transformations with the view to ensuring the complete victory of socialist relations of production in the country, without which a genuine flourishing of the economy, a firm guarantee of its planned development and of the establishment of a reliable base for socialist construction in all spheres of life were out of the question. This task was to be accomplished in the period of the three-year plan of development and transformation of the economy and culture (1958-1960).

Drawn up on the basis of the directives of the 14th and 16th plenary meetings of the Central Committee of the Working People's Party of Vietnam (November 1958 and April 1959) the plan envisaged extensive social transformations in industry, agriculture and trade. In effect it was a plan for accelerating the building up of a socialist economy, and the development of science and culture in the country.

By the beginning of 1960, an estimated 54 per cent of the peasant households in North Vietnam had joined producers' co-operatives. Towards the end of the year this figure had increased to 85 per cent. This was a great victory: having seen the advantages of collective labour for themselves large sections of the rural population united into co-operatives. In line with the instructions of the Working People's Party of Vietnam, the authori-

ties conducted extensive explanatory work among small proprietors, getting them to understand the need for respecting the national interests and the rights of the working people. At the same time changes were gradually introduced in capitalist industry and trade. At first mixed enterprises of the state-capitalist sector were formed which were subsequently reorganised into socialist enterprises. Former proprietors received compensation on a fixed scale and were given jobs in line with their abilities and their services to the state. The National Assembly of the Second Convocation noted, at its First Session (July 1960), that by July 1960 an estimated 95 per cent of capitalist enterprises had been reorganised into mixed state-private enterprises.

The people's power charted the road for the transition of half a million small craftsmen, artisans and other handicraftsmen to a new way of life, with the result that by mid-1960 nearly 70 per cent of them had joined the co-operative movement.

The state took over control of the domestic market, gradually stabilised prices of consumer goods and completely monopolised foreign trade.

The unification of the economic structure and the establishment of socialist relations of production were great revolutionary achievements of the Vietnamese people. This socialist basis fully guaranteed the successful fulfilment of future tasks of socialist construction in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

In 1960, the population's efforts, guided by the Working People's Party of Vietnam and the socialist state, were crowned with a great success: the three-year plan of transformation and development of the economy and culture for 1958-

1960 was fulfilled ahead of schedule. In 1960, the gross output of the heavy industry increased 210 per cent compared with 1957. Producing about 350 kilos of rice per head of population a year, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam advanced to a leading place in Southeast Asia for the per capita output of grain.

Major structural changes took place in the economy. While in 1955 agriculture accounted for 83.1 per cent, and industry for 16.9 per cent of the country's gross national product, the corresponding figures for 1959 were 64.5 and 35.5 per cent respectively.

The socialist sector firmly held the leading place in the economy.

The number of large state-owned industrial enterprises increased from 19 in 1954, to nearly a hundred in 1960. The Republic began to produce locomotives, railway carriages, metal-cutting lathes, ships, chemical products, machines and other goods. A steel-smelting furnace, the first in the country, was built; the power base was expanded and so were transport and communications. The Republic took the road of socialist industrialisation.

As a result of the social reforms and economic development during the transition period the national income has nearly doubled compared with 1955. Peasants' incomes went up by 14.8 per cent in the years 1958-1959, workers' and employees' wages and salaries went up 25.7 per cent in the same period, and handicraftsmen's incomes by 20 per cent. The population's purchasing power rose 15 per cent. A total of 600,000 square metres of housing was built for 90,000 industrial and office workers. The working people were given annual holidays with full pay and the trade unions en-

sured the provision of facilities essential for their rest and leisure.

Great headway was made in health services, particularly in the fight against epidemics and social diseases. Under the provisions for social insurance, state expenditures on social needs increased by 53 per cent from 1958 to 1960. An eight-hour (in some industries a seven-hour) working day was introduced and labour protection was ensured.

The creative efforts of millions of working people, guided by the Working People's Party of Vietnam, produced conditions guaranteeing the further development of the socialist system.

The Third Congress of the Working People's Party of Vietnam, held in September 1960, was an event of tremendous importance for the country's development. The Congress summed up the achievements in all spheres of political, economic and cultural activity and designated the following tasks: "to enhance the solidarity of the entire people, to struggle resolutely for the maintenance of peace; to promote the socialist revolution in the North, and, at the same time, the people's democratic revolution in the South; to achieve national reunification on the basis of independence and democracy; to build a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic, prosperous and strong Vietnam and to contribute effectively to the strengthening of the socialist camp and to the defence of peace in Southeast Asia and the world."*

In April 1963, the Eighth Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Working People's Party of Vietnam fixed the final control figures for

* *Third National Congress of the Vietnam Workers' Party, Documents*, Vol. 1, p. 175.

the first five-year plan (1961-1965) during which it was intended to complete the first stage of socialist industrialisation, carry through the socialist transformation of the economy and lay the foundations for the establishment of the material and technical basis of socialism. In the first four years the average annual rates of growth of industrial production in the state sector under centralised control were 21.8 per cent and in the state sector under the control of the local authorities 19.4 per cent. In 1965, despite US air raids, the gross industrial output went up by 8.4 per cent, and the rice harvest increased 3.5 per cent as compared with the previous year.

By the beginning of 1965, approximately 88.7 per cent of peasant households were united in 30 thousand agricultural producers' co-operatives, including 54 per cent in a higher type of co-operatives. In 1964, an estimated 87.9 per cent of small craftsmen and artisans united in co-operatives, and the transformation of the enterprises in the state-capitalist sector into socialist enterprises was completed.

The face of North Vietnam changed radically in the course of socialist construction. Industrial output rose to 53.7 per cent of the gross national product. Once a backward agrarian country, North Vietnam rapidly developed into an economically advanced republic with engineering, metallurgical, chemical and other industries.

The socialist transformation of the countryside was completed in the main in the period from 1961 to 1965: the area under cultivation increased by 700,000 hectares and there was a substantial rise in the yields of food and industrial crops. Cattle-breeding registered considerable progress.

During the five-year plan period the Govern-

ment also took effective steps to raise the material and cultural level of the masses, thanks to which the peasants' incomes went up by approximately 33 per cent.

Cultural development was particularly spectacular. While before the August Revolution, as a result of the policy of obscurantism enforced by the colonial authorities over a period of several decades, more than 90 per cent of the Vietnam population could neither read nor write, illiteracy among the North Vietnam population had been largely eliminated by 1960. The general education system expanded at a particularly fast rate. The movement to raise the general educational level in the Republic took on mass proportions. Evening courses in general education for adults were organised at almost all industrial enterprises, and co-operative and state farms. The introduction of compulsory universal primary education in the lowlands, as set forth in the five-year plan, proceeded apace.

A total of 2,775,000 children, that is five times the number of pupils in the whole of Indochina in 1939, went to primary and secondary schools in North Vietnam in the 1964-65 school year. At the same time the Republic was solving personnel problems, including the problem of training engineers and technicians, who were practically nonexistent in colonial Vietnam.

Towards the end of 1965, North Vietnam already had 21,000 specialists with a higher education and about 100,000 technicians with a secondary specialised education.

Considerable headway was made in laying the foundations of socialism. This was done in close co-operation with fraternal countries, including the Soviet Union, which extended and continues to

extend large-scale, disinterested assistance and support to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

From 1955 to 1965, the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam signed seven agreements providing for Soviet economic, scientific and technological assistance. Under these agreements the Soviet Union extended credit to the sum of 320 million rubles, or 40 per cent of the total material assistance granted North Vietnam by the socialist countries. 94,500,000 rubles of this is not repayable.

Socialist construction in North Vietnam has proved once again that the co-operation and mutual assistance and the sincere friendship between the countries forming the socialist community, relations that are based on Leninist principles of proletarian internationalism, accelerate their economic development tremendously and strengthen their political and military positions in the face of imperialist aggression.

The Fight of the Vietnamese People Against the US Aggression

The period since 1954 disclosed the existence of a direct connection between the deepening of the crisis of the puppet regime in South Vietnam and the expansion of the US aggression. Each successive setback sustained by the Saigon regime increased the interference in Vietnamese affairs by the US ruling circles.

As tremendous changes typical of the current epoch took place in the world, and North Vietnam built socialism and its material and technical basis successfully, and promoted culture and science,

a powerful revolutionary movement swept across South Vietnam, a land of concentration camps, a land whose soil was saturated with the blood of patriots.

"The immediate and basic objective of the South-Vietnamese people," wrote First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Working People's Party of Vietnam Le Duan, "*is to achieve independence, democracy, peace, neutrality, and prosperity and to advance towards national reunification.*"* But first it was necessary to muster political and military forces, to combine political and armed methods of struggle. A tremendous step in this direction was the formation, on December 19, 1960, of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, uniting the Democratic, Radical-Socialist and People's Revolutionary Parties and also about twenty societies and organisations fighting for the liberation of South Vietnam. The Front guided all work aimed at establishing people's armed forces which resulted in the formation of the Liberation Army of South Vietnam on May 15, 1961, and assumed command of the struggle of the South Vietnam patriots.

The failure of the Ngo Dinh Diem regime to live up to expectations and the threat of its complete collapse caused extreme concern in Washington. In the spring of 1961 US Vice-President Lyndon Johnson visited Saigon and the so-called Staley plan, named after a CIA officer who headed a "scientific" mission, was elaborated for "pacifying" South Vietnam in 18 months. This plan was "perfected" by General Taylor, the ideologist of "small wars".

* Le Duan, *Forward under the Glorious Banner of the October Revolution*, Hanoi, 1967, p. 43.

On February 8, 1962, the US command in South Vietnam, consisting of 14 generals and several dozen colonels of the US Armed Forces was set up in Saigon. The military defeats led to a rapid increase in the number of US military advisers with the puppet army, but all to no avail. Millions of South Vietnamese joined the struggle for the freedom and the unity of their country against the foreign enslavers and their puppets.

On February 16, 1962, the First Congress of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front adopted a programme of struggle, approved the activity of the Provisional Central Executive Committee and elected the lawyer Nguyen Huu Tho as President of the Front.

In May 1963, a powerful wave of national indignation descended on the Americans and their puppets. The National Liberation Front gained control of the situation in the rural areas. Large-scale demonstrations, in which the South Vietnam workers, artisans, students, Buddhists, intellectuals and a section of the national bourgeoisie played an active part, were held in towns. The five-month long crisis of the Diem regime culminated on November 1, 1963, in a state coup in which he and his two brothers were killed.

The Second Congress of the National Liberation Front, which took place in 1964, designated the tasks of the struggle of the South Vietnam patriots in the face of the expanding US aggression.

The downfall of the Diem regime led to the disappearance even of a semblance to a government which the US tried to establish and keep in power in the South Vietnam capital. During the next 18 months there were 13 coups and counter coups. Finally on July 12, 1965, Washington installed

its new puppet, Air Vice-Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, an undisguised admirer of Hitler.

In an attempt to justify its renewed efforts to save the puppet regime in Saigon, the United States began spreading the lie about "aggression from the north" and the alleged infiltration of North Vietnamese troops along the "Ho Chi Minh trail". Meeting in Honolulu in June 1964, high US officials decided to escalate the "battle for Indochina". The United States vastly increased its assistance to puppets in South Vietnam and Right-wing forces in Laos, and stepped up provocations against neutral Cambodia. At the same time it multiplied many times over its armed forces in Thailand and in the whole of Indochina and ordered 125 ships of the US 7th Fleet to patrol the coastline of the Peninsula.

To emerge from its political isolation the United States involved the armed forces of some of its allies in military blocs in the aggression in South Vietnam. The US appeals were answered by South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and the Philippines who sent a total of 70,000 officers and men to the area. The Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and Britain increased their "assistance". In August 1964, just when the puppet regime in Saigon was undergoing yet another crisis, the US military executed a provocation in the Gulf of Tonkin and subjected the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to an air and naval bombardment. In February 1965, coups and palace "revolutions" once again shook the South Vietnam capital. Giving vent to impotent rage the United States ordered its air force to bomb North Vietnam towns and villages. In March 1965, the first US regular army units landed at Danang, a US naval base in South Vietnam. The mechanism

which set the military escalation in motion began to work full speed ahead. By the close of 1965, there were already 184,000 US troops fighting in the rice paddies and jungles of South Vietnam.

In mid-December 1965 and the beginning of 1966, the US diplomacy and propaganda machine started a demagogic campaign, playing up Washington's alleged "peaceful efforts" in Vietnam in the hope of concealing the annihilation of the unvanquished South Vietnamese population with bombs, napalm and gas. But the true value of these manoeuvres was revealed to the world when, following a 37-day pause, the US Air Force resumed its piratical raids on North Vietnam. Fresh US divisions were committed to action and military credits soared to \$ 24,000 million a year. In 1966 the United States had 385,000 troops in South Vietnam.

On March 10, 1966, another crisis gripped the military junta in Saigon. The removal of a "pro-neutral" general from his post was the spark that set off in Saigon, Danang, Hue and other towns, the biggest ever movement for the removal of the puppets and the withdrawal of US forces from Vietnam in which the most diverse sections of the population, but primarily the Buddhists, took part. Armed uprising flared up in Hue and Danang. On US orders these towns were turned into scenes of bloody reprisals.

To raise the spirits of its fawners, the US command sent strategic B-52 bombers on raids to Vietnam from bases in Guam. On July 29, 1966, US planes, including the latest fighter-bombers, raided the North Vietnam capital Hanoi and the major port of Haiphong. The viciousness of these acts aroused the indignation of world public and gave

added impetus to the world movement of solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese people.

In 1967, the United States had 496,000 troops in South Vietnam. The US command augmented the firepower of its forces in the vicinity of the demilitarised zone between North and South Vietnam with the American Army's most powerful 175 mm howitzers which bombarded the North Vietnam territory, ordered the ships of the 7th Fleet to deal devastating artillery and missile blows at the coastal regions of North Vietnam and the Air Force to scatter delayed-action mines in North Vietnam rivers, and resorted to napalm, gases, aerosols, poisonous chemicals, dumdum bullets, cluster and pellet bombs and other savage weapons against the civilian population more and more frequently.

But the United States was not content with merely escalating the war in South Vietnam. The US forces stationed there helped the Saigon puppets organise "peacemaking" and "revolutionary development" campaigns, and "election" campaigns to their central and local organs. They likewise organised the "victory" of the junta at elections to the Constituent Assembly on September 11, 1966. On March 21, 1967, US President Johnson approved the "Constitution" of South Vietnam presented for his consideration by the Saigon puppets at the Guam Conference. In September 1967, the so-called elections of the president, vice-president and senate of South Vietnam were held. General Nguyen Van Thieu was elected President and Nguyen Cao Ky Vice-president. In October there were fake elections to the Chamber of Representatives. As a result, Nguyen Van Loc became prime minister. But the imperialists, who suspected him of harbouring "neutralist" senti-

ments, recommended his replacement. This was done in May 1968 when his place, at the will of the junta, was taken by Tran Van Huong who had held the post in 1965. In August 1969, he was succeeded by general Tran Thien Khiem. These feverish measures to reorganise the mercenary, unpopular regime by replacing its individual members further corroborated the evidence that the military-political plans of the US aggressors and their henchmen in Vietnam were falling one after another. As regards the great victories of the South Vietnam patriots, they were becoming increasingly manifest.

At its Extraordinary Congress in the middle of August 1967, the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam adopted a new political programme which ensured further consolidation of the masses in the fight for their just cause.

In April 1968, at the height of the patriots' offensive on the towns of South Vietnam, the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces of Vietnam was founded, with the Saigon lawyer Trinh Dinh Thao as chairman. The Alliance declared its full support for the National Liberation Front, and began co-ordinated action with it.

Despite the efforts of the US command which at the close of 1968 had 542,000 American and 800,000 Saigon troops at its disposal, the aggressors were besieged in towns and strongpoints. On December 18, 1969, the *Nhan Dan* reported that during four years of hostilities the aggressor forces lost about 650,000 US and 1,500,000 puppet and allied troops in killed or wounded, over 20,000 combat planes and helicopters (excluding those shot down over North Vietnam), an estimated 40,000 military vehicles, more than 2,000 ships and launches. Even according to understated

figures released in Washington, the Vietnam war, reckoned in the number of casualties, became the third biggest in US history. The patriots established control over 75 per cent of the territory of South Vietnam, with a population of more than 10,000,000.

Firmly retaining the strategic and tactical initiative the Liberation Army (which, together with guerilla units and local self-defence forces, forms the People's Liberation Armed Forces) compels the enemy to fight where it finds it convenient. It has modern weapons, enabling it to strike the US aggressors and the puppet troops on land, sea and in the air.

The United States, a powerful capitalist state, which has hurled vast quantity of materiel and a 500,000 strong army into the war, has failed to crush the resistance of the peoples of North and South Vietnam. In the North the socialist system has become still stronger. That the imperialist plans of the United States have fallen through is clear not only from the fact that American forces have sustained huge casualties (particularly the more than 3,300 combat planes of the latest types shot down over North Vietnam and the 150 ships and launches sunk along its shores) but also in that their operations have only served to strengthen the unity and determination of the Vietnamese people. The air raids did not stop creative work in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Third Session of the National Assembly of the Republic, held in April 1966, summed up the results of the five-year plan and endorsed a two-year plan for development and construction under difficult conditions. Industry was evacuated from towns and scattered throughout the country. Armed people operated the lathes, worked

in the fields and attended university lectures. A total of 21,000,000 collective and individual air-raid shelters were built. Shock teams of workers and peasants overfulfilled planned assignments in industry, transport, construction and agriculture. The Vietnam People's Army showed excellent military preparedness and high moral and political qualities.

Bent on crushing the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the US troops dropped over two million tons of bombs, missiles and rockets on its territory—ten times the amount dropped on Japan during the Second World War. Each of the six principal North Vietnam cities was bombed almost a hundred times. US planes raided Vinh 800 times dropping 15,000 bombs which demolished 90 per cent of the buildings. They also bombed 80 per cent of the small towns in North Vietnam, made 3,000 attacks on dams and hydro-power and irrigation schemes, wrecked 181 hospitals, 668 schools, 334 churches and 151 pagodas. Yet nothing could crush the fighting spirit and the determination of the North Vietnamese.

The national patriotic movements conducted under the slogans "the four goods", "the three preparednesses" and "the three commitments" are a magnificent example of the unity of the Working People's Party of Vietnam and the people of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The first movement, launched before the US aggression against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, was aimed at ensuring Party cells a good showing in production, in the organisation of the masses for the fulfilment of the policy of the Working People's Party of Vietnam, in work among the population and the maintenance of close ties with the people, and in accomplishing the Party or-

ganisational work and the work of political education. The "three preparednesses" movement embodied the resolve of the youth in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to fight for their country, to work for their country and to go anywhere for their country. In an hour of danger the Vietnamese women began to fulfil their three commitments: in production they replaced the men who joined the army, they looked after the children and the family in the absence of their husbands and sons, and took up arms whenever the situation demanded. Putting these slogans into practice turned the Republic into an impregnable bastion, which has withstood all the trials of war.

Following the suspension of US air raids in November 1968, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam resumed its peaceful labour while remaining prepared to repulse any attack by the US imperialists and their supporters. In 1969, industrial output (rehabilitation work must be taken into account) increased almost 6 per cent over the 1968 level. By the end of 1969, 93.7 per cent of the peasants were united in co-operatives whose cash funds had increased on the average 17 times, and the cultivated area by an average of more than three times. Five tons of rice per hectare were gathered on hundreds of thousands of hectares and slightly less on an area of 370,000 hectares. Nevertheless, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam set the task of raising the rice harvests on 670,000 hectares, where the yield had declined during the years of US air strikes.

In 1969, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam had three times as many schools as in 1959, and nine times more students in institutions of higher learning and specialised secondary schools. Today

there are 35 colleges and 200 specialised secondary schools in the country.

In 1970, the Central Committee of the Working People's Party of Vietnam summoned the citizens of the Republic to mark with fresh successes in their work and struggle the four great anniversaries: the Lenin Centenary, the 80th anniversary of the birth of Ho Chi Minh, who died on September 3, 1969, the 40th anniversary of the Working People's Party of Vietnam and the 25th anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The movement for the fulfilment of Ho Chi Minh's behests has included the whole population of the Republic.

During all these difficult and glorious years the people of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have rendered all the help they could to their Vietnamese brothers.

In June and July 1965, as a result of negotiations held during the visit of a DRV economic delegation to the socialist countries, agreements were signed on the further development of economic and cultural co-operation between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the socialist countries, and on economic aid to the Republic.

Negotiations conducted in October 1966 by the Soviet and the DRV government delegations culminated in the conclusion of an agreement on Soviet assistance in developing the economy and strengthening the defence capability of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. In conditions of continuing US aggression, similar agreements were signed in 1967, 1968, 1969 and 1970. In the course of the talks held in Moscow in October 1969, the two sides agreed on how and in what way the Soviet Union will render essential assistance to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and discussed

measures to expand fraternal relations between the two countries, and co-operation between the CPSU and the Working People's Party of Vietnam, and between the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Agreements on additional Soviet economic and military assistance to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1970 were signed in Moscow on June 11, 1970. The negotiations between economic delegations of the two countries held in October of the same year terminated in the signing of agreements providing for Soviet assistance to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1971. The address of the 24th Congress of the CPSU "Freedom and Peace to the Peoples of Indochina" evoked world-wide response. Speaking at the 24th Congress of the CPSU First Secretary of the Working People's Party of Vietnam Le Duan expressed "profound gratitude for the valuable support and assistance, which, in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people are granting us".*

Party and government delegations from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam held talks with other socialist countries in 1971.

Hundreds of millions of people throughout the world have vigorously protested against the aggressive war unleashed by overseas colonialists, and have come out in support of fighting Vietnam. Not only socialist states, but also governments, parties, public organisations, well-known scientists, writers and public leaders in a number of capitalist countries are demanding an end to the bloodshed and peace in Indochina. Even in the

* *Pravda*, April 2, 1971.

United States itself the Administration's foreign policy has provoked unprecedentedly violent and angry protests. Judging by the mass campaigns in October and November 1969 and 1970 and 1971 an ever increasing number of American citizens are raising their voices in protest and are fighting vigorously against attempts to crush the freedom-loving people who live at the other end of the world simply because the Pentagon needs Vietnam as a bridgehead for its global strategy and because the Vietnamese people have chosen their own road without the approval of US monopolists.

The world-wide movement of solidarity with Vietnam gained added impetus from many measures carried out by the World Peace Council, the Fourth and Seventh Congresses of the World Federation of Trade Unions, the 1968 Extraordinary Session of the General Council of the WFTU, the Conference of Solidarity with the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America in Havana in 1966, the World Conference on Vietnam in Stockholm in 1967, the Ninth World Festival of Youth and Students For Solidarity, Peace and Friendship, the Extraordinary Conference of the Organisation for Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity in Cairo in September 1968, the Western Hemisphere Conference to End the United States War in Vietnam in December 1968, the international conferences in support of Vietnam in Stockholm in December 1968 and May 1969, the World Peace Assembly in Berlin in June 1969, the World Youth and Student Vietnam Solidarity Rally in August 1969, the conferences of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Countries, meetings of party and state leaders of socialist countries, mass demonstrations of broad

sections of the population in all countries and continents, and world campaigns in support of fighting and invincible Vietnam. The Appeal of the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties adopted on June 10, 1969 "Independence, Freedom and Peace to Vietnam!" which censures the US aggression and outlines measures to solidify all progressive world forces in the anti-imperialist struggle is particularly significant among all these noble efforts. The document states in part: "We call for the immediate initiation of further, still more powerful, varied and co-ordinated action by the anti-imperialist, peace-loving forces in support of the struggle of the Vietnamese people against the US aggression!"*

In response to the US provocation of November 21-22, 1970, and President Nixon's decision to resume the bombing of the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam whenever he may think it necessary the Vietnamese people and world public opinion have mobilised their forces still further. At the World Conference on Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia held in Stockholm on November 28-30, 1970, representatives of 400 organisations from 70 countries drew up a concrete programme, designed to increase world-wide activities in support of the struggle waged by the people of these three Indochinese countries.

Meeting in Berlin on December 2, 1970, the Warsaw Treaty countries issued a Statement in connection with the worsening situation in Indochina. They condemned the US aggression and announced their readiness to continue to furnish every support to the peoples of Indochina in re-

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties*, Prague, 1969, p. 45.

elling the armed imperialist intervention, and to assist the efforts of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam and the patriotic forces of Laos and Cambodia to achieve a speedy political settlement in Indochina.

Peking leaders, who in effect are abetting the US aggression, did not take part in a single act of solidarity with Vietnam.

Paris Talks: The Road to Peace in Vietnam

After the offensive of the South Vietnam patriots in the spring of 1968, it became clear that the United States had sustained a military and political defeat in Vietnam. On March 31, 1968, President Johnson announced a partial reduction in air raids on North Vietnam. On May 10, 1968, preliminary talks between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and US representatives on the settlement of the Vietnam problem were opened in Paris. From May 13 to November 1, 1968, they met 28 times. In the course of these conversations the DRV diplomats with the backing of world public opinion step by step forced the US side to recognise their just demands.

The delaying tactics of the US representatives were explained, among other things, by the feverish efforts of the US military command to achieve a victory over the South Vietnamese patriots and also gain time to prepare the Saigon puppets for a new phase of the struggle. To this end the US command in Vietnam, now headed by General Creighton Abrams, who had replaced General

William Westmoreland following the latter's fiasco, vastly extended the use of air and naval forces in South Vietnam and in the 200-kilometre zone north of the 17th parallel. The US air pirates dropped 630,000 bombs (52,500 tons a month) on South Vietnam in 1968—more than the US Air Force had dropped on the whole of Europe in the Second World War—and sprayed poisonous chemicals on an area of over 1,000,000 acres.

But once again Vietnamese patriots gave a lesson to the US military. In North Vietnam, beating off attacks in the zone of the 17th-19th parallels, they rapidly restored the damage caused by the aggressors. In South Vietnam, the patriots struck blows at the punitive forces and at the same time conducted elections to local organs of power—People's Councils and National Liberation Committees—in the liberated villages, districts and provinces. On October 28, 1968, the Liberation Press Agency reported that the candidates of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front and the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces polled more than 90 per cent of the vote.

As the US presidential elections drew nearer, the White House, on November 1, 1968, was forced to announce the unconditional termination of air raids and naval bombardment of the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. At the talks in Paris agreement was reached on the commencement of official quadripartite meetings of representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, the USA and the Saigon administration for the purpose of working out a peaceful settlement of the Vietnam problem.

Keeping to the letter of the 1954 Geneva

Agreements, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam once again expounded a clearcut attitude on this issue, demanding that:

the US Government should end the aggressive war against Vietnam, and undertake no acts violating the sovereignty or threatening the security of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam;

all US and satellite troops should be withdrawn from South Vietnam;

the people of South Vietnam should themselves settle the internal affairs of South Vietnam without foreign interference, and in accordance with the political programme of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front;

the problem of the reunification of Vietnam be resolved by the population of both North and South Vietnam without foreign interference.

On November 3, 1968, the Central Committee of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front published a statement on the political settlement of the South Vietnam problem containing the following five points:

"1. South Vietnam is resolved to fight for the realisation of its sacred rights, namely, independence, democracy, peace, neutrality, prosperity, and ultimate peaceful reunification of the fatherland.

"2. The US imperialists must end their war of aggression against Vietnam, withdraw all their troops, the troops of their satellites and all means of waging war from South Vietnam, and dismantle all US military bases in South Vietnam.

"3. The internal affairs of the South Vietnamese people must be settled by the South Vietnamese people themselves in accordance with the political programme of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, without foreign interference.

rence. A broad national and democratic coalition government should be set up and free general elections held in South Vietnam.

"4. The question of reunifying Vietnam will be decided by the people in the two zones of Vietnam, step by step, by peaceful means and on the basis of consultations and agreements between the two zones, without foreign interference.

"5. South Vietnam will pursue a foreign policy of peace and neutrality: no military alliances in any form with foreign countries, and establishment of friendly relations with all countries on the five principles of peaceful coexistence."*

The five points were approved in a joint communique released at the end of the meeting, which took place on November 3-5, 1968, of the delegations of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front headed by Nguyen Huu Tho and the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces headed by Trinh Dinh Thao.

The legitimate demands of the Vietnamese people were vigorously supported by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and by the international movement of solidarity with Vietnam. Committees for peace in Vietnam and committees of support for Vietnam were formed and launched serious activity in dozens of countries. Some Western countries have changed their attitudes on the Vietnam issue under the pressure of their people. Sweden and Switzerland, for example, have recognised the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and there have been contacts to this effect between representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and of Italy, Norway and Canada.

The first plenary meeting of the four sides

* *New Times*, No. 46, Nov. 18, 1968, p. 29.

opened on January 25, 1969, on Avenue Clébert in Paris after three months of procrastination and obstruction by the Saigon Administration.

On May 8, 1969, the delegation of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front at the Paris talks submitted a document summing up "the principles and essence of the global solution of the South Vietnam problem for re-establishing peace in Vietnam".* Consisting of 10 points the document contained a comprehensive plan for ensuring the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people, including the right to independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. It demanded that the United States and its allies end their aggression unconditionally and withdraw their troops and equipment from South Vietnam. The document envisaged the formation of a provisional coalition government of the political forces working for peace, independence and neutrality, which would negotiate and sign agreements on the withdrawal of the US and allied troops; establish national concord and a broad alliance embracing the various sections of the population; guarantee democratic freedoms; restore the economy and ensure normal life for the population; organise universal free and democratic elections throughout South Vietnam. The National Liberation Front representatives suggested that the people of South Vietnam should, freely, without foreign interference, by universal suffrage, elect a Constituent Assembly which would draw up a constitution and set up a coalition government. The document stated that South Vietnam would pursue a peaceful and neutral foreign policy. "On April 15, 1971, Xuan Thui, head of the

* See *Pravda*, May 9, 1969.

delegation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the Paris Talks advanced a three-point plan for the settlement of the Vietnam problem. An important seven-point proposal was introduced by head of the delegation of the Republic of South Vietnam Nguyen Thi Binh at the 119th meeting on July 1, 1971. Without replying to these initiatives of good will, the USA resorted to backstage machinations in an effort to settle the issue behind the backs of the Vietnamese people. The US interventionists and their Saigon puppets put all sorts of obstacles in the way of the Paris talks, and launched hectic "government" activity in the country. More than 30 newspapers which had dared to disagree with the official pronouncements of the Saigon authorities rejecting the just demands of the National Liberation Front were closed down, and attempts were made to conduct elections of rural administrative organs in some areas.

On April 12, 1971, Nguyen Van Thieu "reorganised" the Saigon administration by removing a number of unreliable ministers and replacing the commanders of military districts. On August 29, 1971, he conducted the farcical "election" of 159 deputies to the Chamber of Representatives of the Saigon "congress", and proclaiming himself the sole candidate in the October 1971 presidential election, was naturally "elected" to this post.

The United States placed great hopes in the reorganisation of the puppet army for keeping their Saigon henchmen in office. The bulk of the army consists of conscripted South Vietnamese who do not want to fight against their compatriots. Suffice it to say that in 1968 and 1969 alone 240,000 of its officers and men deserted. But the Pentagon and the US command in South Vietnam

are still hoping to raise the fighting capacity of this army. In July 1969, while on a visit to Guam, President Nixon announced a new doctrine—the “Vietnamisation” of the US aggression. Accordingly the Pentagon launched a “reorganisation” of the puppet forces. In 1969, it supplied Saigon troops with 750,000 sophisticated M-16 automatic rifles, hundreds of aircraft and sea and river craft, and carried out the “programme of modernising the Saigon army” at the cost of \$1,000 million. But victory could not be bought.

The national liberation forces continued their successful operations. In 1969, there was a sharp increase in the casualty figures of the US expeditionary corps. Losses were particularly high among the officers. Even the official, greatly understated figures put the US losses at 40,000 officers and men killed and about 300,000 wounded by the beginning of 1970. In the number of casualties the Vietnam gamble became the United States’ third biggest war (after the First and Second World wars).

Sustaining defeat after defeat the Pentagon generals struck heavier and more vicious blows at the South Vietnam civilian population. Napalm, phosphorus, pellet and fragmentary bombs, dum-dum bullets and war gases were used on a still larger scale. The news of the massacre of all the inhabitants of the village of Song My in the South Vietnam province of Quang Ngai roused the utmost indignation in the world. The policy of genocide has not bolstered the positions of the interventionists and their Saigon wards; on the contrary, it has torn the mask off the bestial visage of US imperialism.

The Congress of People’s Representatives of South Vietnam held from June 6 to 8, 1969, in

the liberated zone, unanimously resolved to establish the Republic of South Vietnam, form a Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam and a Government Consultative Council. Huynh Tan Phat was elected Chairman of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and Chairman of the Central Committee of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front Nguyen Huu Tho was elected Chairman of the Consultative Council. The Provisional Government published a 12-point programme of action embodying the interests and the aspirations of millions of South Vietnamese in the economic, political and cultural fields and designated the objectives of the foreign policy of the Republic of South Vietnam. Mme Nguyen Thi Binh, Foreign Minister of the Republic of South Vietnam, was appointed head of her government's delegation to the Paris talks.

World public, including the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in June 1969, heartily welcomed the establishment of the Republic of South Vietnam. The Meeting sent a telegram to the Provisional Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, warmly welcoming its formation as a new and important stage in the heroic liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people and reiterated its consistent support for the struggle of the Vietnamese people until the final victory. The head of the CPSU Delegation to the Meeting, General Secretary of the CC CPSU Leonid Brezhnev, suggested that a system of security be established in Asia to ensure peace and security in this region.

After a meeting with the Saigon puppets on Midway Island in the summer of 1969, President Nixon stated that 60,000 US troops would be

withdrawn from South Vietnam. Then he announced that the US expeditionary corps in South Vietnam, numbering over 500,000 men, would be reduced by another 50,000 officers and men by April 15, 1970, and 150,000 more would be withdrawn by the spring of 1971. He also made it clear that over 200,000 US "support troops" would remain in South Vietnam for a long time. At the same time the US Air Force, under the pretext of reconnaissance operations and "defensive actions" violated the White House decision to suspend the bombing of the North Vietnam territory 12,000 times, losing dozens of aircraft in the process.

To compensate itself for the narrowing down of the sphere of aggression in Vietnam, the Pentagon started a war in Laos where it sent over 12,000 "advisers" and considerably increased massive air strikes at areas directly controlled by the Neo Lao Haksat (the Patriotic Front of Laos). From attacks on frontier areas of Cambodia, the United States turned to direct intervention against this peace-loving country, whose neutrality the United States and the other participants of the 1954 Geneva Conference had pledged to respect.

Thus Washington has turned the Paris talks into a screen for its policy of "maximum military pressure" in Indochina. The insincerity of the US ruling circles is proved by over 130 fruitless meetings that have already taken place in Paris and the lowering in the level of the talks, (when head of the US delegation is replaced by another, the talks in his absence are conducted by rank-and-file members of the delegation).

Moreover, at a press conference on December 10, 1970, President Nixon spoke of the lack of headway at the Paris talks and threatened to resort

to unusual measures in the course of the US intervention. That was the response of the United States imperialists to the constructive proposals advanced by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam on September 17 and December 10, 1970. In view of the fresh acts of aggression perpetrated by the United States in Indochina, the Central Committee of the Working People's Party of Vietnam and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam published an appeal summoning the Vietnamese people to mobilise their efforts to repel the insidious enemy. On December 17, 1970, the Soviet Government issued a statement to the effect that the Soviet Union, loyal to the Leninist principles of proletarian internationalism, supported the just stand of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Soviet Government declared that it would draw the relevant conclusions from the fresh provocations and threats to expand the aggression against a fraternal socialist state—the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

In the USA, people are becoming increasingly aware of the criminal nature of the US aggression in Indochina. Hence the tremendous repercussions caused by the open letter of October 1969 from the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the American people, and the unusually powerful movement, embracing the young Americans and wide sections of the population, for a Vietnam moratorium, for a swift, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the US forces from South Vietnam and for a just solution to the Vietnam problem.

Vietnam has millions of friends throughout the world, who, with fraternal solidarity, are prepared

to increase their assistance still further. In their telegram of December 19, 1970, to the Chairman of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, Dr. Nguyen Huu Tho, and the Chairman of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, Dr. Huynh Tan Phat, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, Leonid Brezhnev, Nikolai Podgorny and Alexei Kosygin wrote: "On the day of the glorious anniversary of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government, loyal to proletarian internationalism, once again express their solidarity with heroic Vietnam and their firm determination to continue rendering every support to the Vietnamese people in their just struggle."*

In July 1970, the First Session of the Eighth Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted the Statement of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in Connection with the Expansion of the Aggression of US Imperialism in Indochina which fully approved the political course and the practical activities of the Soviet Government aimed at supporting the peoples of Indochina in their struggle against the imperialist aggression and contained the Soviet people's demand for an end to the aggressive activities of the US Government in Indochina.

The determination of the Soviet people to act hand in hand with the Vietnamese people in their just struggle against the US imperialists was reiterated in October 1971 during the visit to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam of the

* *Pravda*, December 20, 1970.

Soviet Party and Government delegation headed by Member of the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee, Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet N. V. Podgorny.

Having forged their unity in the course of decades of anti-imperialist struggle, the Vietnamese people, backed by millions of their friends throughout the world, are determined to achieve their sacred goals. "We pledge," wrote Le Duan, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Working People's Party of Vietnam, "to give all our strength to defeat the US imperialists and their puppets, to bring our war of resistance to a victorious conclusion, to fulfil our sacred national and lofty international duty, and to be worthy of the trust of our brothers and friends on all the five continents."*

All honest people throughout the world are extending a hand of assistance and brotherhood to heroic Vietnam. Although many stern trials and difficulties still lie ahead, the sacred fight of the Vietnamese people against the US interventionists and their puppets will inevitably end in victory.

* *Pravda*, March 24, 1970.

LAOS

Present-day Laos has an area of 236,800 square kilometres. Its territory extends for over a thousand kilometres, forming a narrow strip along the middle reaches of the Mekong River in the centre of the eastern part of Indochina.

In the north Laos borders on the Chinese People's Republic, in the east on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, in the southeast on South Vietnam, in the south on Cambodia, in the west on Thailand, and in the northwest on the Union of Burma. Almost all of Laos' frontiers pass through mountain areas, with the exception of its frontier with Thailand, which runs along the Mekong River for about 800 kilometres.

More than half of the country is covered by mountains and high plateaus. The drainage system consists of the Mekong River and its tributaries and mountain rivers with many rapids. The Mekong is not navigable.

Laos has considerable natural resources. Over half the country is under forest. Of useful minerals which are still insufficiently prospected Laos has iron ore, copper, tin, lead, gold, precious stones, coal, etc. But at present only tin ore is mined (in the Nam Pathen Valley north of Thakhek).

The country's population of about 3,000,000 is divided into three basic groups: Lao-Lum (Lao

and the Thai peoples), Lao Theung (Kha people), and Lao-Sung (Meo, Lolo, Lu). The largest group, the Lao-Lum, making up more than half the total population live in the lowland river valleys; the Lao-Sung live on wooded mountain slopes (mainly in the north); the Lao-Theung are mountain people. Each group has its own relatively integral, historically formed, economic and cultural type. The majority of the inhabitants are Buddhists. Hinayana* is the official religion.

Laos is an agrarian country. Over 95 per cent of the population are farmers and the chief crop is rice.

With the exception of mining (the extraction of tin concentrate), industry is virtually non-existent.

Laos' economic backwardness is a heritage of its colonial past. From 1893 to 1954 Laos was an "autonomous protectorate" within the French Union in Indochina. Throughout this period the people of Laos persistently fought against the colonialists for their national independence.

The rout of nazi Germany and militarist Japan, the formation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in September 1945, and the weakening of the positions of French imperialism in Indochina created favourable conditions for the development of the national liberation movement in Laos. Led by the independence movement known as Lao Issara, Laos proclaimed independence on October 12, 1945. A provisional government and a provisional Chamber of People's Representatives were

* Hinayana or *Little Vehicle* branch of Buddhism is also professed in Burma, Cambodia, Thailand and Ceylon. There is another branch—the Mahayana or *Great Vehicle*—which appeared somewhat later (in A.D. 100-200) and is dominant in Korea, China and Mongolia.

formed, which promulgated a provisional constitution.

But, supported by British imperialists, the French colonialists returned to Laos the same year, defeated the Lao Issara movement at the beginning of 1946 and re-established their domination over the country. Nevertheless, they could not ignore the desire of a section of the Laotian feudal aristocracy for the unity of the country and its increased autonomy. In August 1946, France recognised the unity of Laos under King Sisavang Vong of Luang Prabang. Laos was allowed to have a constitution, parliament and government. The Constitution was promulgated on May 11, 1947, and in August a National Assembly was elected. Under the Franco-Laotian General Convention of July 19, 1949, France *de jure* recognised the independence of Laos as an associate state of the French Union. But France retained the right to represent Laos in international politics, to deploy her troops on Laotian territory and employ them at will, and maintained her hold on key positions in the Laotian economy. In other words, France virtually remained in control and consequently was able to dissolve the Lao Issara movement, whose leaders had been living in exile in Thailand since 1946. In 1949 and 1950, many members of the Lao Issara movement returned to Laos and began to collaborate with the French authorities. Yet the French colonialists were unable to weaken the national liberation movement completely, and it eventually embraced increasing sections of the Laotian people, particularly the peasants.

On August 13, 1950, representatives of wide sections of the country's population convened a congress in the jungles of the Sam Neua Province.

It was a turning point in the development of the national liberation struggle against the French colonialists. On that day the national liberation front of Laos, the Neo Lao Itsala, was formed with Prince Souphanouvong as its elected head. At the same time the Prince was appointed head of a newly-formed government.

Early in 1951, in the interests of joint struggle against the common enemy—French imperialism—the peoples of Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia established a United Resistance Front.

Confronted with the increasing scope of the national liberation struggle in Indochina, particularly in Laos, the French colonialists began to manoeuvre, in an attempt to hold their positions in Laos and a Franco-Laotian treaty of friendship and co-operation was signed on October 22, 1953. France reaffirmed her recognition of Laos' independence, but the articles touching upon foreign policy, military, legal and other issues set down in the protocols to the treaty left Laos, in effect, dependant on France. The purpose of the treaty was to undermine the resistance struggle in Laos and to break up the union between the three peoples of Indochina who were fighting against their oppressor.

Nevertheless, the military defeats sustained by the French imperialists in Indochina, the struggle of the French working people against the dirty war in that part of the world, the insistent demands of world public opinion for an end to that war and the efforts of the socialist community led by the Soviet Union, made the French Government look for a solution to the Indochinese problem within the framework of an international conference.

The 1954 Geneva Agreements on Indochina put

an end to the French imperialists' war against the peoples of this subcontinent. France recognised Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos as independent states and pledged to withdraw her armed forces from their territories. To regulate internal political issues, connected with the existence of the anti-French resistance, the royal government of Laos promised to conduct general elections to the National Assembly in 1955. It also announced its intention not to enter into any military alliances and not to allow any foreign bases on Laotian territory. The participants of the Geneva Conference announced that they would respect the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia and would refrain from interfering in their internal affairs. Control over the fulfilment of the 1954 Geneva Agreements was entrusted to the International Control and Supervisory Commission on Laos.

The Laotian people suffered heavily from the military operations conducted by the French colonialists in the years 1945 to 1954 on the territory of their country and from Laotian territory against the peoples of Vietnam and Cambodia. Tremendous damage had been done to the underdeveloped economy of Laos, which was then a remote outskirts of the French colonial empire. The greatest damage was sustained by agriculture, the main branch of the Laotian economy. Many agricultural areas were devastated. The cultivated area decreased and there was a sharp drop in agricultural production as a result of military operations and the forcible mobilisation of peasants, whom the colonial authorities used in their war effort. Tin mining, Laos' only industry was dislocated. Many roads fell into disrepair. The deficit in the Laotian budget and foreign trade balance in-

creased still further. The overwhelming majority of the population was illiterate. There were no qualified specialists, and people with a higher education were few and far between. Urgent measures had to be taken to remedy the situation.

It was only natural, therefore, that everything connected with the termination of hostilities and settlement of internal political problems was of primary importance for Laos.

The provisions of the Geneva Agreements concerning the cease-fire, the regrouping and the withdrawal of French troops from Laotian territory, the withdrawal of the Vietnamese people's volunteer units who had assisted the Neo Lao Itsala, and the withdrawal of military units under the Neo Lao Itsala and also of the resistance fighters to two northern provinces (Sam Neua and Phong Saly) were completed by November 19, 1954. These measures were to have been followed by a settlement of political issues—the conduct of universal and free elections to the National Assembly in 1955 and the reunification of the country. But nothing of the sort was done either immediately after the signing of the Geneva Agreements or later.

The prospect of a settlement of domestic problems in Laos was viewed with concern by aggressive circles in the USA, who regarded Laos as an important military and strategic base in Indochina. Taking advantage of the weakening of the position of France in that country, the United States tried to inveigle Laos into the aggressive SEATO bloc, turning it into an "anti-communist citadel" and an outpost of colonialism in Southeast Asia.

Aggressive circles in the USA tried to intimidate Laotian politicians and statesmen with an

alleged "communist threat" and advised them to wipe out the participants in the anti-French resistance. In return they promised to render economic and military assistance to Laos.

At a meeting in the beginning of September 1954, the Prime Minister of the royal government, Prince Souvanna Phouma and the Chairman of the Neo Lao Itsala, Prince Souphanouvong agreed to negotiate a political settlement. But the talks did not take place as a result of the intrigues of the US imperialist circles, who incited Right-wing Laotian leaders to depose the government of Souvanna Phouma. In 1955, the new government, headed by Ktay Sasorith, made an attempt to wipe out the resistance and Neo Lao Itsala fighters in the provinces of Sam Neua and Phong Saly, but sustained a defeat, despite US assistance.

The mounting dissatisfaction among wide sections of the population and the increasing demands for peace, forced the Laotian reactionaries and their backers to retreat. In the beginning of 1956, Souvanna Phouma once again became head of government, and negotiations with the Neo Lao Haksat* leaders were resumed. Despite US economic pressure and blackmail, the talks which were held in Vientiane and lasted for over a year led to the signing of a series of agreements which became known as the 1957 Vientiane Agreements, between the royal government and the Neo Lao Haksat leadership.

The conclusion of these agreements was a major victory for the Laotian patriotic forces and their supporters. The Neo Lao Haksat was given

* Having accomplished its task of liberating Laos from the French colonialists the Neo Lao Itsala at its Second Congress, in January 1956, decided to call itself the Neo Lao Haksat—the Patriotic Front of Laos.

the status of a legal party on a par with the other political parties, and the fighters of the anti-French resistance received full civil rights. Two battalions of the national liberation army were included in the royal armed forces, and agreement was reached on conducting by-elections to the National Assembly. At the insistence of the Neo Lao Haksat the royal government passed a more democratic electoral law. Two Neo Lao Haksat representatives, Prince Souphanouvong and Phoumi Vongvichit became ministers of planning and culture respectively. The provinces of Sam Neua and Phong Saly were placed under the royal administration. The government was pledged to pursue a course aimed at consolidating national unity and independence, adhere to a neutralist foreign policy, establish diplomatic relations with socialist countries and to accept assistance from all countries, provided there were no strings attached. At the by-elections in May 1958, the Neo Lao Haksat won nine seats in the National Assembly.

The prospect of Laos advancing along the road of growing national unity, democracy, independence and neutrality and the increasing influence of the Neo Lao Haksat and its supporters clashed with the interests and plans of the reactionaries in Laos and aggressive circles in the United States. For the US imperialists it signified the collapse of their plans of drawing Laos into SEATO and turning it into their strategic base. Therefore, they resumed political and economic pressure on the royal government of Laos. Taking advantage of the increased dependence of Laotian economy on American aid (from 1955 to 1957 it amounted to \$ 165 million), the United States threatened to reduce it considerably in 1958. Under the circum-

stances the Laotian Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma had to go to Washington to negotiate a reversal of US Government's decision.

Fearing that the successes of the Neo Lao Haksat and its adherents would weaken their position, the reactionaries in Laos began to unite with support from the United States. In the summer of 1958, the Kao Na (National Party) and the Se Ri (Independent Party) merged to form the Lao Loum Lao Party (Association of the People of Laos) made up of representatives of the pro-West feudal aristocracy, top officials and military. Simultaneously the openly pro-US young army officers, diplomats and officials founded the Committee for the Defence of National Interests.

Having united and won an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly with the help of the US aggressive circles, the Laotian reactionary forces deposed the government, which included two Neo Lao Haksat representatives. A new government was formed, headed by Phoui Sananikone, a Lao Loum Lao leader. It was not long before members of the Committee for the Defence of National Interests began to play an active role in this government.

The Sananikone Government rejected the Vientiane Agreements, began persecuting the patriotic forces and, in effect, reversed the neutralist foreign policy of its predecessor. In the beginning of 1959, the National Assembly granted Sananikone emergency powers enabling him to paralyse the legislative organ in which there were nine Neo Lao Haksat representatives. In February 1959, he announced that the 1954 Geneva Agreements had been fulfilled by Laos and that Laos was no longer subject to them. As a result of the persecution and arrest of the leaders of the Neo Lao Haksat

and its representatives in the National Assembly in June 1959, this patriotic organisation was forced to go underground.

Laos now faced the threat of a civil war and foreign intervention by SEATO countries. The royal army, already under the control of the US military, made an unsuccessful attempt to rout the military units of the patriots who had taken to the mountains and the jungle. Then, as a pretext for foreign interference, a complaint was lodged with the UNO that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam had committed aggression against Laos. But the Sananikone government was unable to back this up with any evidence.

In the meanwhile there was a sharp exacerbation of contradictions between Sananikone's Party and the Committee for the Defence of National Interests, which accused the Sananikone government of being inefficient and indecisive in their efforts to crush the patriotic forces. In January 1960, the acute political struggle culminated in a military coup and the assumption of power by the Committee for the Defence of National Interests, in which Phoumi Nosavan played a very important part.

The strengthening of the reactionary forces who sought to subjugate Laos to US interests and turn it into a US military base, and the unpopular policy of the governments headed by Sananikone and the leaders of the Committee for the Defence of National Interests who replaced him, caused a wave of indignation throughout the country. The outcome was a government coup on August 9, 1960, which brought to power supporters of the neutralist foreign policy and national unity.

Prince Souvanna Phouma became head of the new government which was approved by the King

and confirmed in office by the National Assembly. He made it clear that the government would work for restoring peace and unity in the country and pursue a policy of non-alignment. The government and its programme were welcomed by broad sections of the population and received support from the Neo Lao Haksat. Steps were taken to put the programme into effect and the government opened negotiations with the Neo Lao Haksat. In October 1960, diplomatic relations were established with the Soviet Union.

In response to these moves the Laotian reactionary forces formed their own government in Savannakhet in the south of the country, to which the USA furnished all the assistance it formerly granted to the legal government of Souvanna Phouma. In December 1960, the Savannakhet group launched an offensive on Vientiane. Hostilities broke out between this group and the united forces of the neutralists headed by Souvanna Phouma and the Neo Lao Haksat. With the military assistance of the United States and its SEATO allies, particularly Thailand, the Savannakhet group captured Vientiane and established control over Western Laos, but failed to crush the neutralist bloc and the Neo Lao Haksat.

Thanks to the efforts of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and also to the initiative shown by neutralist Asian countries, a peaceful solution was found to domestic issues.

In the beginning of May 1961, representatives of the three Laotian political groups—Right-wing, neutralist and the Neo Lao Haksat—met in Laos to negotiate a cease-fire. On May 16, the International Conference of Foreign Ministers of 13 countries (Burma, Britain, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, India, Cambodia, Canada, the

Chinese People's Republic, Poland, the USSR, Thailand, France and South Vietnam) in which Laos took part, convened in Geneva to search for a solution to the Laos problem, a problem created by the interference of the US imperialists in Lao-tian internal affairs.

In June 1962, despite Right-wing opposition and US efforts to wreck the talks, an agreement was reached on ending the civil war and on the formation of a united government of representatives of the three interested parties. Prince Souvanna Phouma became its head, with Prince Souphanouvong, the Neo Lao Haksat representative, and General Phoumi Nosavan, a leader of the Right-wing group, as his deputies. The government which was called a government of national unity based its activity on the principle of unanimous decisions on all questions. It drew up a programme providing for the restoration of peace, the establishment of national unity, economic development and a neutralist foreign policy.

The International Conference of Foreign Ministers of 13 countries in Geneva finished its work in July 1962. At the concluding stage the national unity government issued a statement announcing its resolve to follow a course of peace and neutrality. This statement was included in the Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos passed at the Conference. The Declaration, and the Protocol to it, were an expression of the international recognition of Laos' neutral status. At the same time these documents set out the first measures for eliminating the consequences of the civil war and the imperialist intervention.

The formation of a government of national unity and the international recognition of the neutrality of the Kingdom of Laos was a major

victory for the national patriotic forces which created conditions for the development of the country along the road of peace, stronger national unity, independence and neutrality. But the realisation of this prospect depended above all on the strict observance of the 1962 Geneva Agreements and the agreements reached between the three political groups in Laos. Regrettably, this has not happened to this day.

Fresh US interference in Laos' internal affairs made it impossible for the Laotians to solve their internal political problems. The United States imperialists are still preventing Laos from following the road of independence, neutrality, unity and the development of an independent economy.

The US interference in the internal affairs of Laos, which continued even after the conclusion of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laotian neutrality and the formation of a government of national unity, in fact led to the collapse of this government, and intensified the struggle between Laotian political groups, and within the Right-wing and neutral groups; with the result that the country became divided into two zones. And the civil war is spreading.

In violation of the 1962 Geneva Agreements, the United States imperialists are now engaged in direct aggression against the Laotian people. Since the summer of 1964, US combat planes operating from the aircraft-carriers of the 7th Fleet and from bases in Thailand, have conducted daily air raids on areas controlled by the Neo Lao Haksat. These raids grew in number following the cessation (in November 1968) of air raids on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and reached threatening proportions in the first half of 1970, when US planes daily flew 500 to 700 sorties

over the territory controlled by Neo Lao Haksat. Increasing numbers of the strategic B-52 bombers are being used in the attacks. From May 1964 to August 1971 US Air Force dropped 3,000,000 tons of bombs on Laos. Towns and hundreds of villages have been destroyed by US bombs and napalm. In Central Laos, for example, the town of Chepon (Sepone) was wiped off the face of the earth. Civilians—women, children and old people—whose sole guilt is that they refuse to bow to the US diktat and want to see their country genuinely independent, neutral, peaceful and prosperous, are being killed.

The escalation of the US air war is accompanied by increased land operations. The Right-wing group's army which, with US assistance, now totals almost 70,000 officers and men, not counting the reactionary General Vang Pao's special 30,000-strong army raised by the US military, each year undertakes a drive into the zone controlled by the Neo Lao Haksat. These operations are planned and commanded by US military advisers and specialists of whom, according to the Neo Lao Haksat figures, there are now about 12,000 in Laos. So far the United States has not sent its land forces into Laos as it has in Cambodia, but is using more frequently the troops of its SEATO allies and South Vietnamese puppet troops in military operations in Laos.

In keeping with the Guam doctrine of "Vietnamisation" of the war in Indochina, US President Nixon on January 27, 1971, approved the plan for a US-Saigon intervention in Southern Laos. Called Lam Son 719 (after a mountain range in Vietnam) the operation was undertaken for the purpose of cutting up the regions controlled by the Neo Lao Haksat and wiping out the

Laotian patriotic forces piecemeal. On February 8, twenty thousand Saigon troops supported by 9,000 US troops and aircraft invaded Laos along Highway 9 running east to west from Dong Hoi in South Vietnam through Khe Sanh and Chepon to Savannakhet on the border between Laos and Thailand. Designed to achieve an easy victory, Lam Son 719, which according to the Neo Lao Haksat involved 45,000 US-Saigon troops, 1,500 planes, 800 helicopters and a large number of tanks and armoured vehicles, ended within six weeks in a heavy defeat for the invaders. Putting up a stiff resistance, the Laotian People's Liberation Army by March 23 expelled the US-Saigon invaders out of Laos.

The piratical air raids and land operations in Laos, which the US ruling circles have unsuccessfully tried to conceal from the world and from public opinion in the USA, reflect Pentagon's desire to recoup themselves after the military defeats suffered by the American army in the dirty war against the South Vietnam patriots.

Led by the Neo Lao Haksat, the People's Liberation Army and units of the patriotic neutralist forces, with the support and backing of the population, have courageously repelled the US aggression and are protecting the regions under the Neo Lao Haksat control. In the period between May 1964 and August 1971, the patriots shot down, or destroyed on the ground, over 2,229 US planes, killed or wounded tens of thousands of officers and men of the Right-wing group, United States and allied forces, and destroyed large quantities of military equipment of the aggressor. On March 25, 1971, the *Laos News* carried a report released by the Information Office of the Lao Patriotic Front in Hanoi which said that, according to the

Supreme Command of the Laotian People's Liberation Army, during the fighting on Highway 9 from February 8 to March 23 alone, the US-Saigon forces lost over 15,000 officers and men in killed and wounded, including 200 US troops, and over a thousand were taken prisoner. Material losses of the invaders were 496 planes and helicopters, 586 combat vehicles, including 318 tanks, 144 guns, and many other weapons and a large amount of ammunition.

While engaged in armed combat, the Laotian patriotic forces are also searching for a peaceful solution of the Laotian problem. The Declaration of the Central Committee of the Patriotic Front of Laos of March 6, 1970, concerning a political settlement in Laos was a step in this direction. In this Declaration the Neo Lao Haksat sets out a comprehensive and realistic five-point programme for a peaceful settlement in Laos. It states, in particular, that "a peaceful settlement must be based on the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos and on the actual present-day situation in the country".* The Central Committee of the Neo Lao Haksat considers that the "Laotian problem must be solved by the interested parties in Laos", and that in order to create favourable conditions for their getting together "the USA must immediately end the escalation of the war and unconditionally stop all air raids on Laotian territory".**

This peace initiative of the Central Committee of the Neo Lao Haksat was supported by

* *Declaration du Comité Central du Front Patriotique Lao au sujet d'une solution politique du problème Lao*, Ed. du Neo Lao Haksat, Mars 1970, p. 7.

** Ibid., p. 10.

the Soviet Government,* and by all circles working for a settlement in Laos and for the re-establishment of peace in Laos and Indochina.

On March 22, 1970, a Neo Lao Haksat representative officially handed over the five-point programme to the government of Souvanna Phouma. On April 27 and June 22, 1971, the Neo Lao Haksat again submitted proposals based on this programme in an effort to bring about a peaceful settlement in Laos. Regretfully, the Right-wing group made no attempt to take advantage of the prospects for establishing contacts between the two leaders of the country's main political groups. Moreover, in the spring of 1970 it made an attempt to carry out a coup and install a regime which would ask the USA to bring in its ground forces into Laos, as had happened in Cambodia. To cripple all prospects for a peaceful settlement, the Right-wing group undertook another large-scale offensive in Xiengkhoueng Province in June 1971. This offensive was launched by the troops of the Right-wing general Vang Phao and about 30 Thai battalions with the massive support of the US Air Force. In the course of bitter fighting the patriotic forces frustrated the offensive of the Right-wing troops as they had done on numerous previous occasions.

In response to the escalation of the US aggression in Southeast Asia, the leaders of the delegations from the people of Laos, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the South Vietnam Republic held a conference on April 24 and 25, 1970. The Conference strikingly demonstrated the unity of the peoples of Indochina in repulsing the aggression of the US imperialists.

* *Pravda*, March 16, 1970.

It issued a statement which said in particular that the peoples of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam will "render each other every assistance, in compliance with requests from each country, and on a basis of mutual respect".*

In their just struggle against the US aggression, for independence, neutrality and peace in their country, the heroic Laotian people have the support and assistance of the socialist community and of all other peace-loving forces of the world. In May 1970, the peoples of the world gave further proof of their growing solidarity with the struggle of the Laotian people. At the decision of the World Peace Council a week of solidarity with the struggle of the Laotian people was held, beginning on May 17. During those days, a wave of meetings and demonstrations protesting against the US aggression swept across the world. From May 18 to 21, Cairo was the site of an international conference (convened at the initiative of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation) in support of the Laotian people's struggle against the US aggression. Attended by over 160 delegates from 72 international, national and regional organisations, the conference adopted a programme of action in support of the Laotian people. The programme provides for the initiation of a campaign, in all countries, to explain the struggle of the Laotian people and to unmask the US aggressors, the organisation of solidarity weeks with the fighting Laotian people, and the calling of an extraordinary international conference of representatives of world public to discuss developments in Indochina.

The Soviet people welcomed the international

* *Pravda*, April 28, 1970.

conference and its decisions. In his message, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU Leonid Brezhnev expressed confidence that the conference "will make a fresh contribution to the cause of strengthening the solidarity and unity of all anti-imperialist forces and will further promote the activity of the peoples of Asia and Africa and all peace-loving forces in the fight against the aggressive designs of the enemies of peace, freedom and progress".*

In connection with the expansion of the US aggression in Laos, the Soviet Government on February 26, 1971, decisively condemned the "armed intervention in Laos as fresh crime of the United States grossly violating the generally accepted norms and principles of international law and running counter to the commitments undertaken by the United States** in keeping with the UN Charter, the 1954 and the 1962 Geneva Agreements to safeguard Laotian neutrality. The Statement further underlined that in order to solve the problem of Indochina, including the problem of Laos, the US must stop its aggression and that the proposals of the Central Committee of the Neo Lao Haksat in particular are a foundation for restoring peace in Laos. "The just struggle of the people of Indochina for freedom and independence," the Statement went on, "has the invariable support of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, of all peace-loving forces of the world. The Soviet Union cannot overlook the fresh escalation of the US aggression."***

The Laotian patriotic forces speak highly of the Soviet position on the question of Laos. Ad-

* *Pravda*, May 20, 1970.

** *Pravda*, February 26, 1971.

*** Ibid.

At the 24th Congress of the CPSU Vice Chairman of the CC of the Neo Lao Haksat, Keson Phomvihan said in part: "Our people are constantly availing themselves of the generous assistance and support of the CPSU, the Soviet Government and all Soviet people. And today, on behalf of the entire Laotian people, we express our sincere and profound gratitude for this vast and invaluable assistance and support. . . . All our recent victories are inseparable from the great assistance of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries."*

In its appeal "Freedom and Peace for the Peoples of Indochina" the 24th Congress reaffirmed that "the Soviet Union. . . has sided consistently and firmly with the liberation movement in South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia which is making an outstanding contribution to peace and to the national independence of the peoples."**

Although Laos was recognised as an independent state 17 years ago, the Laotian people and their patriotic forces have been deprived of the opportunity to concentrate their efforts on the economic development of their country and on raising their living standards. They are forced to wage a bitter struggle to preserve their national independence, which is threatened most of all by US imperialism. The aggression of the United States against the Laotian people is further proof of the predatory nature of US imperialism, which, having assumed the role of a world gendarme, is bent on crushing the national liberation movements of the Asian and African peoples, who are

* *Pravda*, April 4, 1971.

** *Documents of the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1971.

striving to break the chains of imperialism and to follow a road of social progress.

Delivering the Report of the CC CPSU to the 24th Congress of the CPSU, General Secretary of the Central Committee Leonid Brezhnev said: "The imperialists are prepared to commit any crime in their efforts to preserve or restore their domination of the peoples in their former colonies or in other countries which are escaping from the grip of capitalist exploitation.... And the continuing US aggression against the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos is the main atrocity committed by the modern colonialists; it is the stamp of ignominy on the United States."*

* *Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the 24th Congress of the CPSU*, Moscow, 1971, pp. 27-28.

CAMBODIA

Cambodia is a state on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia with an area of 181,000 sq km and a population of 7,000,000 (1968) of whom 85 per cent are Khmers. There are also Khasi, Stieng, Phnong and other tribes, and some 260,000 Vietnamese and over 300,000 Chinese,* and a small number of Malays, Chams and Laotians.

Khmer is the official language, and Buddhism is the official religion. The capital, Phnom Penh, has more than 600,000 inhabitants (1968).

With the adoption of a Constitution in 1947, Cambodia became a parliamentary monarchy but the throne has been unoccupied since the death of King Norodom Suramarit in 1960.

The supreme legislative body of Cambodia is the National Assembly, which is elected every four years. The second chamber of parliament, the Council of the Kingdom, is a consultative body. The executive authority lies with the Council of Ministers headed by a Chairman.

In March 1970, Right-wing forces carried out a state coup and announced that Norodom Sihanouk had been removed from his post as head of state, to which he had been elected in 1960. In October of the same year the authorities in Phnom Penh

* 1968 estimate.

announced the abolition of the monarchy, and proclaimed Cambodia a republic.

Cambodia is an ancient state in Southeast Asia. The recorded history of the Cambodian people goes back to the earliest centuries A.D. In that period, as a result of the union of the tribes of the Mon-Khmer peoples in the south of the Indochina Peninsula, the Kingdom of Phunan was formed, and later, in the 5th century, the Kingdom of Chen-la in the middle reaches of the Mekong River.

In the 9th century the Khmers formed the Angkor Empire on the Indochina Peninsula, which for five centuries (9th-13th) was one of the most advanced and powerful states in that part of the world. During that period the Khmers made a tremendous effort to develop the valley of the lower Mekong. On the banks of Lake Tonle Sap they built the huge temple cities of Angkor Tom and Angkor Wat, architectural masterpieces of the peoples of Indochina.

From the 13th century the Angkor Empire came under repeated attacks of Thai and other foreign invaders. It was these invasions, which were accompanied by the exacerbation of internal social contradictions, that led to the decline of the Angkor state and its civilisation.

In the latter half of the 19th century French colonialists seized Cambodia. Under the agreements of 1863 and 1884 the King of Cambodia was deprived of actual political power and Cambodia became a French protectorate. This lasted for 80 years and preserved Cambodia as an agrarian country dominated by semi-feudal relations. In economic development Cambodia lagged behind neighbouring Vietnam and Thailand. It had no modern industry at all and the export of rub-

ber, rice and other agricultural raw materials was the principal source of enrichment for the French monopolies. Chinese compradore capital played an important part in its internal trade.

During the Second World War Cambodia was occupied by Japanese forces and its people were exploited by both Japanese militarists and French colonialists.

As a result of Japan's defeat in August 1945, the rule of foreign imperialists ended in Cambodia. But in October of that year French troops captured Phnom Penh, in an attempt to restore French domination. The changed situation in the countries of Indochina, however, forced the colonialists into political manoeuvring, and, under a provisional agreement signed in 1946, Cambodia received limited internal autonomy.

In 1947, the first constitution was promulgated in Cambodia, a parliament was formed and some political parties, expressing the interests of businessmen, intellectuals and officials, were allowed to function.

By the treaty of 1949, the French recognised Cambodia as an independent state within the French Union. But since France's recognition of Cambodia's independence was chiefly of a formal nature, the Cambodian parliament did not ratify the treaty.

The attempts to restore colonial rule in Cambodia under the banner of "internal autonomy" led to an upsurge of the liberation movement. The armed form of this struggle for independence was the Khmer Issarak movement, which embraced a section of the peasants, the artisans and also the nascent rural and urban proletariat. Using guerilla tactics, the Khmer Issarak liberated a number of regions.

In the beginning of 1953, King Norodom Sihanouk supported by the Khmer nobility and local intellectuals launched a vigorous diplomatic battle for the re-establishment of Cambodia's state sovereignty. This struggle was officially called the Royal Crusade for the Independence of Cambodia.

Taking advantage of the successes of the liberation movement, Cambodian patriotic circles forced the French colonialists to grant the country complete independence. Under the Franco-Cambodian agreements signed in June-October 1953 supreme authority in the country was transferred to the royal government. On November 9, 1953, there was an official ceremony in Phnom Penh which terminated the French colonial administration in the country, and the day was proclaimed National Independence Day.

At the 1954 Geneva Conference on Indochina, Cambodia pledged not to enter into any military alliances, not to allow foreign military bases on her territory and to pursue a peaceful foreign policy.

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The events connected with the re-establishment of Cambodia's sovereignty caused important changes in the alignment of the country's political forces.

In March 1955, King Sihanouk abdicated in favour of his father, Norodom Suramarit, and vigorously embarked on the formation of the Sangkum Reastr Niyum or Sangkum (Socialist People's Community of Cambodia), a broad national organisation embracing representatives of different sections of the population. According to its Rules, the Sangkum's main objective is to unite

all national forces "fighting against injustice, corruption, privations, oppression, and treachery committed against the Khmer people and their country".*

The Sangkum was established following the lifting of the 1952 emergency laws which had imposed a ban on political parties.

In the autumn of 1954, former members of the Khmer Issarak movement formed the progressive Pracheachon (People's) Party expressing the interests of the working people. This Party worked for the strict observance of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, for the defence of Cambodia's national sovereignty and the eradication of all feudal and colonial survivals.

In 1954, a number of small political parties, reflecting the interests of some sections of the intelligentsia and the emergent bourgeoisie, appeared on the political scene. But in the summer of 1955 these parties, with the exception of the Democratic Party and the Pracheachon Party, dissolved at their own initiative and merged with the Sangkum.

In the general elections held in September 1955 the Sangkum polled 83 per cent of the vote and won all the seats in the National Assembly.

Leading positions in the Sangkum were assumed by the political bloc of the three social strata: the emergent local bourgeoisie, the Khmer aristocracy and part of the national intelligentsia. The Sangkum leadership vigorously opposed the efforts of the Right-wing forces to form an alliance with foreign imperialists, and so won the support of the organisation's rank and file.

From 1955 to 1969, the patriotic forces of the

* Claude-Gilles Gour, *Institutions Constitutionnelles et Politiques du Cambodge*, Paris, 1965, p. 418.

Sangkum fought against internal and foreign reaction under the banner of the ideological and political principles of a "Khmer, Buddhist socialism", a combination of the ideas of non-proletarian socialism and the ethical norms of the Buddhist philosophy. The main political content of the Khmer socialist doctrine was anti-colonialism and anti-feudalism.

In September 1955, the new (Sangkum) National Assembly decided to withdraw Cambodia from the French Union, and in January 1956, amended the Constitution and proclaimed Cambodia an independent and sovereign state. In December 1955, Cambodia became a member of the United Nations.

In 1956, the government passed a constitutional law granting suffrage to women and promulgated decrees abolishing some of the privileges enjoyed by ministers and high-ranking officials.

The re-establishment of state sovereignty confronted Cambodia with the tasks of overcoming its economic backwardness and of consolidating its political independence on this basis. In tackling intricate problems of economic development in the period from 1955 to 1969 the Sangkum leadership concentrated on developing three economic sectors: state, national private capitalist and mixed.

The state sector was established by buying the assets of French companies and building new enterprises, and by increasing government participation in mixed companies. By 1968, the state sector of the economy emerged to first place for volume of capital investment into industrial production.

After 1955, there was a perceptible increase in the activity of Cambodian private capital, partic-

ularly in small-scale industrial production, and in the transport, the municipal economy and domestic trade. But the absolute growth of national accumulations remained small.

Between 1955 and 1969, the government rigidly controlled the activity of foreign capital. The main objective of this policy was to change the branch structure of foreign capital investments towards channeling more funds into the development of material production.

Encouraging the influx of foreign capital into industry and plantations, the government passed a law in 1957 guaranteeing that foreign property would not be nationalised for a period ranging from 10 to 30 years. Fresh foreign capital investments were not subject to taxation on exported profits for the first few years of their operation in the country.

Despite these privileges, export-import operations and commercial credits remained one of the main applications of foreign capital in Cambodia between 1955 and 1963.

In November 1963, the Cambodian Government nationalised foreign trade and banking, striking a blow at the positions of foreign capital in these spheres. But overseas monopolies retained their control over plantation rubber production, which was concentrated in the hands of five French companies.

One of the most involved social problems in Cambodia is that of abolishing the semi-feudal exploitation of the peasants by commercial and usurious capital.

The peasants are the largest social class in the country. A large strata of land-hungry peasants is a characteristic of the social structure of the Cambodian countryside. In 1963, more than 50

per cent of the peasant households owned small plots of two hectares or less, accounting for a mere 16 per cent of the total arable land.

The métayage system and usury were the principal forms of exploiting the toiling peasantry. According to 1952 figures, 75 per cent of peasant households owed money to usurers.

Concerned with restricting the activities of commercial and usurious capital and stimulating commodity production in agriculture, the Cambodian Government decided to establish credit and supply and sales co-operatives in the village.

In 1956, a state credit organisation called the Royal Co-operative Service (OROK) was set up in the country to render material and organisational assistance to village co-operatives. From 1956 to 1968, a total of 800 co-operatives were formed. But the absolute scale of state credit in the village lagged behind the needs of commodity production in agriculture, which restricted the extent to which the exploitation by usurers could be abolished.

The Government financing of the economy was conducted within the framework of long-term development plans.

The two-year development plan for 1956-57, which was extended to the end of 1959, was largely designed to restore and develop communications and to expand and modernise the system of public education and health protection.

In the first five-year plan for 1960-1964, paramount attention was attached to the development of national production. In this period 8,000 million riels were to be channeled into the state sector. As distinct from the two-year programme, 70 per cent of the outlays under the five-year plan were to come from internal resources.

Owing to great economic and technical difficulties the Government only managed to cover 78 per cent of the planned outlays. But even though unfulfilled, the first five-year plan, contributed to the development of the state sector of the economy.

Considerable progress was made in health protection and even more in education. In 1968, a total of 1,161,000 people, 17 per cent of the population, were studying, including 1,025,000 in primary schools. A number of higher educational institutions were established, with 48 departments and 11,000 students.

Cambodia's proclamation of independence stimulated the development of the national industry.

Approximately 3,500 small industrial enterprises and workshops were built between 1955 and 1967. Twenty relatively large factories, some of which had been built with the assistance of socialist countries, hold a leading place in manufacturing. Gradually Cambodia acquired a metal-working, oil refining, building materials and several other industries which it had not had before.

In the period from 1955 to 1969, the Government channeled relatively large funds into the development of the infrastructure. The construction of the port of Sihanoukville on the coast of the Gulf of Siam was vital to the country's economy. This port gave Cambodia a direct outlet to the sea thus reducing the need to use river communications along the lower reaches of the Mekong, which is controlled by the US-Saigon authorities.

While noting the development of individual branches of the economy, it is necessary to stress that the absolute figures of the growth of the gross national product remained very low.

The country's economy is still based on agriculture, where 77 per cent of the able-bodied population are engaged.

The majority of Cambodian farms specialise in the production of irrigated rice, the country's chief food and export crop which is grown on 85 per cent of the total cultivated area. The annual growth rate of the gross output of rice and other crops per head of population from 1955 to 1965 was approximately 2.5 per cent, which was too slow to meet the increasing domestic and export requirements.

To boost the national economy it was necessary sharply to increase investments into its productive branches. But this was very difficult due to a number of factors, primarily the limited funds available to the Government.

In the past decade the Cambodian state budget was greatly out of balance. The amount of money in circulation increased steadily, which impeded development of the local economy.

In December 1968, the Cambodian Government embarked on a new course in its economic policy to overcome financial difficulties and to raise production. The direct objective was to increase both external and internal sources of financing the economy by stimulating the activity of private capital.

In 1968 and 1969, the questions of the country's economic policy became the object of a sharp struggle among its ruling circles. This period was marked by increased activity among Right-wing groupings in the National Assembly, who tried to take advantage of the new course in the economic policy to curtail the activity of the state economic sector. Acting in the interests of some circles of the local bourgeoisie these groupings demanded

the abolition of state monopoly in foreign trade and bank credits which would have been detrimental to the country's national interests.

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The Government's efforts to promote the economy in the period from 1955 to 1969 were carried out in conditions of unremitting US imperialist pressure on Cambodia, and of a sharp struggle by the national forces against internal reaction, which was attempting to bring the country into the orbit of imperialist influence.

Before the Second World War the United States had, in effect, no hand in the Cambodian economy or politics. After 1953, the situation changed radically. The disintegration of the French colonial system in Indochina encouraged the United States to take vigorous steps to establish control over South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos and turn these countries into a base for its expansion in Southeast Asia.

Under an agreement signed in May 1955, the United States began sending military and economic aid to Cambodia. From 1955 to 1963 it granted Cambodia non-repayable credits to the sum of \$366 million, of which \$269 million went to meet its civic needs. The bulk of civic assignments was used to finance the development of the infrastructure. A considerable portion of the US subsidies was granted in the form of commodity deliveries, which sharply stimulated the activity of commercial agents in the country. The concrete objectives of the US aid came to light as early as 1956, when, taking advantage of Cambodia's financial dependence, Washington made an attempt to bring it under SEATO influence. Since then Cambodia has become the target of direct

pressure from the United States and its allies in Indochina (Thailand and the Saigon regime).

The aggressive US policy encountered vigorous opposition from the Cambodian patriotic forces, and the overwhelming majority of the country's population came out in support of the Sangkum leadership's neutralist policy.

In 1956, the Cambodian Government made moves to establish diplomatic and political contacts with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. That year a Cambodian government delegation paid friendly visits to Moscow and the capitals of a number of other socialist countries, during which it signed agreements designed to promote economic and cultural ties with them on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. The establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, in May 1956, and economic co-operation between the two countries were very important for the consolidation of Cambodia's international status and sovereignty.

In April 1956, the Cambodian delegation at the Bandung Conference of Asian and African countries confirmed the Government's determination to pursue a neutralist foreign policy.

The Cambodian Government's efforts to counteract US expansion and to safeguard national sovereignty were undertaken in conditions of increased activity by internal reaction and mounting Right-wing opposition, which attacked the policy of neutrality and soon turned into an agent of US imperialism.

The chief social mainstay of the Right-wing opposition was the local commercial and compradore bourgeoisie, which reaped profits from brokerage connected with the realisation of the US aid programme.

Covert opposition to the policy of neutrality began to grow in 1956. In 1957, Right-wing elements won the support of the Democratic Party, whose leaders attacked the Sangkum leadership. In the deteriorating political situation the Government closed down the newspaper *Prachatiptai*, the Democratic Party's mouthpiece. In the autumn of the same year the Democratic Party ceased to exist, when many of its members went over to the Sangkum.

In September 1957, the National Assembly passed the Neutrality Act which gave the form of law to the country's neutralist foreign policy and its refusal to belong to any military or political blocs.

The defeat of Right-wing elements in 1957 forced the internal reactionaries to adopt new tactics and to shift from "constitutional", that is parliamentary methods of struggle to conspiratorial and clandestine activity.

In the beginning of 1959, an anti-Government plot led by the deposed political leaders Son Ngoc Thanh and Sam Sary* was uncovered in Cambodia.

* During the Second World War Son Ngoc Thanh established close political contacts with the Japanese invaders and with their support became head of a pro-Japanese government in Cambodia in the summer of 1945. In 1952, he moved to Thailand where, with the patronage of the USA and Thai authorities, he formed a para-military organisation of Khmer emigrants in Thailand and South Vietnam called Khmer Serei. This organisation was set up to conduct subversive activity against the national government of Cambodia and its neutral foreign policy. Thanh contacted opposition elements inside Cambodia, which were grouped around Sam Sary, who, up to 1957, held a number of high government posts. Following the 1970 state coup Thanh returned to Cambodia and assumed a leading post in the Phnom Penh regime.

Using anti-communism as a screen, the conspirators intended to seize power in Cambodia and to change its domestic and foreign policy. In February 1959, the Cambodian Government blasted these plans. The official inquiry into the attempt to carry out a coup revealed that the activity of clandestine opposition was directed and financed by the United States and by reactionary circles in Thailand and South Vietnam.

These events resulted in the suppression of the main centres of the anti-national forces, who had planned to push Cambodia off its neutralist course. But the subversive activity of the imperialist circles against Cambodia continued and the situation in the country remained tense.

Early in 1960, the Saigon authorities demanded that Cambodia's coastal islands in the bay of Kompong Som, where the new ocean port of Sihanoukville is situated, be transferred to their control. Chauvinistic circles in Thailand also renewed their territorial claims to Cambodia. In the spring of 1960, firing was resumed along Cambodia's frontiers and once again Cambodian territory was subjected to armed attacks.

In June 1960, a referendum on crucial domestic and foreign policy issues gave overwhelming support for the Government and its policy of neutrality. Accordingly, the National Assembly decided to transfer supreme authority in the country to Norodom Sihanouk and gave him the title of head of state.

The sharp increase in US military and political expansion in Indochina in 1961 and 1962 led to an upsurge of the liberation movement in that part of the world. The armed struggle for the

independence of South Vietnam assumed ever greater proportions.

The deeper the United States became involved in the dirty war in Vietnam, the more insistent became its efforts to gain control of Cambodia. Washington's aggressive policy acquired an increasingly dangerous trend. This made it essential for Cambodia to review her relations with the United States, and above all, to refuse further US military and economic assistance. Cambodian leaders repeatedly pointed out that the main purpose of US assistance was not to develop the country's economy, but to inhibit her rapprochement with socialist countries and to promote the growth of the capitalist sector in order to keep Cambodia within the imperialist sphere of influence. Continued assistance from the USA would have seriously endangered Cambodia's national security, in view of mounting pressure from SEATO.

Under these circumstances, the Cambodian Government decided, in November 1963, to refuse all US assistance.

In 1964, Cambodia took part in negotiations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam that were aimed at normalising and promoting their relations on the basis of the 1954 Geneva Agreements.

In 1964 Cambodia established diplomatic relations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam at ambassadorial level; in 1967 an agreement was reached on instituting a permanent representation of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front in Pnompenh, and in June 1969 Cambodia extended recognition to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of

South Vietnam and established diplomatic relations with it.

In November of the same year the Sangkum leadership proposed a conference of the patriotic forces of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. This conference, which became known as the Indochina People's Conference, took place in Phnom Penh in March 1965, and was attended by representatives of 39 patriotic organisations in Indochina.

In a unanimously adopted general resolution the Conference vigorously condemned US interference in the internal affairs of the countries of Indochina and recognised the need to give greater scope to the struggle against colonialism and imperialism.

In May 1965, in view of the hostile nature of the US policy towards their country, the Cambodian Government severed diplomatic relations with the United States. In response Washington increased its military pressure on Cambodia, and the piratical air raids on Cambodian frontier areas became systematic in character. The Khmer Serei subversive groups were also sent across the border to Cambodia more frequently.

From 1965 to 1969, the Cambodian Government searched for broader forms of international recognition of Cambodia's neutrality and territorial integrity. These efforts were supported by socialist countries. In a joint Soviet-Cambodian communique, released in June 1967, the Soviet Union recognised the territorial integrity of Cambodia within her present-day frontiers. Recognition of the existing frontiers of Cambodia was also extended by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and other socialist countries, the National Libera-

tion Front of South Vietnam and a number of capitalist states.*

In March 1971, draft directives for economic planning in the Union of Burma were published. They provided for the compilation of a 20-year plan. The first of its five parts to be formulated is the four-year plan for 1971/72-1974/75. In this period it is planned to raise the volume of the gross national product by 19 per cent and the per capita income by 8 per cent. The draft directives were approved by the 1st Congress of the Burmese Socialist Programme Party in July 1971.

For several years running the United States sabotaged all Cambodian measures to resolve the issues connected with the international recognition of her frontiers. The United States stubbornly refused to make any commitments which could have limited its opportunities of encroaching on the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cambodia.

Experiencing increasing difficulties in effecting their aggressive policy in Indochina, the US ruling circles were compelled to modify their tactics in the "Cambodian question" in 1969, and in April of that year Washington officially recognised the Cambodia's existing frontiers. In July 1969, diplomatic relations between the two countries were re-established. But these changes in Cambodian-US relations did not put an end to US subversive activities against Cambodia. Washington had no intention of abandoning its plans to end Cambodia's neutrality and bring her under its military and political control. This was proved by the developments in 1969 and 1970.

* By the close of 1969 more than 40 states had recognised Cambodia's existing frontiers.

The period from 1969 to the beginning of 1970 was characterised by an intensification of the political struggle on the domestic scene. A powerful opposition, consisting of Right-wing groupings, emerged in the Cambodian parliament and state apparatus. These elements wanted to limit the sphere of the state sector's activity in the economy, and demanded that Cambodia reverse her policy of solidarity with anti-imperialist forces in Vietnam and Laos.

In March 1970, Right-wing forces, supported by top army officers, carried out a coup and removed from office the legitimate head of state, Narodom Sihanouk. According to reports in the press, including bourgeois publications, the Central Intelligence Agency of the USA played an important part in preparing and bringing about this coup.

The coup was accompanied by bloody repressions against the Vietnamese civilians residing in the country. They were provoked by imperialist agents who sought to sow discord between the Khmer and Vietnamese people and thus split the ranks of the country's patriotic forces.

Taking advantage of the assumption of power by Right-wing groups in Phnom Penh, the United States established military control over Cambodia and turned it into a stronghold for its expansion in Indochina. On the night of April 30, 1970, under President Nixon's order, US troops were moved into Cambodia in gross violation of the 1954 Geneva Agreements and of the generally recognised standards of international law. Along with the US troops, Cambodia was invaded by units of the Saigon puppet army. The US and Saigon troops attacked Cambodian towns and villages, causing casualties among the civilian pop-

ulation, including old people, women and children. The overt US armed intervention in Cambodia continued until July 1970, when Washington was forced to pull its ground troops out of the country. But the United States did not end its aggression against Cambodia. Its airforce is continuing its piratical attacks on Cambodian territory and is actively assisting the Saigon troops, who are still conducting punitive operations on Cambodian territory.

The United States armed interference in Cambodia's internal affairs has created yet another hotbed of war in Indochina. In view of this it became necessary for the patriotic forces in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to solidify their ranks. At the close of April 1970, a high-level conference of representatives of the peoples of Indochina, which was also attended by a Cambodian delegation, decided that henceforth the anti-imperialist forces of the Indochina Peninsula will co-ordinate their efforts in the joint struggle against the common enemy—the US aggressors.*

The piratical actions of the US imperialists and their satellites are coming up against mounting resistance from the country's patriotic forces. The establishment of the National United Front of Cambodia at the beginning of May 1970, with Norodom Sihanouk as its elected head, was an important landmark in the development of the liberation struggle of the Cambodian people. In its political programme the Front underlined that its main task was that of rallying all classes and sections of the population, all Cambodian patriots, regardless of their political views or religious beliefs, for the defence of national independence, peace, neutrality, and territorial integrity of Cam-

* *Pravda*, April 28, 1970, July 16, 1970.

bodia within her existing frontiers, and for the establishment of a "popular, free and democratic authority"* in that country.

Guided by the National United Front of Cambodia, the patriotic forces in the country have launched an armed struggle against the imperialist aggressors and their agents in Cambodia. In this struggle the patriotic forces liberated large areas where they are putting through important measures to strengthen the political and social base of the liberation movement.

The peoples of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are giving full support to the legitimate struggle of the Cambodian people. The Statement of the Soviet Government read out at a press conference in Moscow on May 4, 1970, by Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Alexei Kosygin, rigorously condemned the US aggression in Cambodia and emphasised that the Soviet Union would draw the necessary conclusions for its policy from the aggressive US actions in Southeast Asia.**

On May 10, 1970, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Alexei Kosygin, sent a telegram of greetings to Norodom Sihanouk on the occasion of the formation of the National United Front of Cambodia and the consolidation of the united anti-imperialist front of the peoples of Indochina. Expressing deep indignation at the US aggression in Cambodia the head of the Soviet Government stressed that the struggle of the patriotic forces of that country "will, as before, meet with sympathy and support in the Soviet Union".***

On July 15, 1970, the Supreme Soviet of the

* *Pravda*, May 17, 1970.

** *Pravda*, May 5, 1970.

*** *Izvestia*, May 12, 1970.

USSR issued a statement, in connection with the expansion of the US aggression in Indochina, in which it approved the political line and practical activities of the Soviet Government in supporting the peoples of Indochina in their struggle against the imperialist aggression. "Expressing fraternal solidarity with the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia," the statement said, "the Soviet people demand the cessation of the aggressive acts of the US Government in Indochina."*

In its appeal "Freedom and Peace for the Peoples of Indochina" the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on behalf of the Soviet Communists and all Soviet people declared its full solidarity with the liberation forces of Indochina.

The escalation of the US aggression in Indochina makes greater unity and cohesion of all socialist, all anti-imperialist and peace-loving forces imperative in their struggle against the aggression.

The people of Cambodia are not alone in their struggle, and they are determined to uphold their country's freedom and national independence.

* *Pravda*, July 16, 1970.

BURMA

(The Union of Burma)

Burma occupies the westernmost part of South-east Asia and borders on India, China, East Pakistan, Laos and Thailand. A total area of 678,000 sq km and a population of more than 28,200,000 (est. 1971) make her an average-size country.

Burma is inhabited by a number of nationalities and tribes. The Burmese, who are the majority nationality, make up about 70 per cent of the population. The biggest of the indigenous national minorities are the Karens (more than 8 per cent of the population), the Shans (about 7 per cent), the Chins (2 per cent) and the Kachins (1.5 per cent). The mountainous border regions of the western, northern and eastern parts of the country are inhabited by the Naga, Wa and other tribes, who are still extremely backward in their socio-economic and cultural development.

There is also a fairly large number of inhabitants of immigrant descent. At the beginning of the sixties some 800,000 immigrants from India and Pakistan and several hundred thousand Chinese were living in the country. (Since 1963, over 180,000 Indians and Pakistanis left Burma for their home countries.)

Rangoon, the capital of Burma, had 1,700,000 inhabitants (within the limits of Greater Rangoon)

in 1970. All other towns are much smaller, and approximately 75 per cent of the population are rural.

Burma is an economically backward country. At the close of the sixties 68.5 per cent of the employed population were engaged in agriculture and forestry, 7.2 per cent in the manufacturing industries (including handicrafts) and approximately 1.3 per cent in the mining, construction and power industries.

A major rice producing country, Burma, until recently, was one of the world's principal exporters of this crop. She also has great teak forests which yield durable timber, used primarily for shipbuilding. Prior to the destruction wrought by the Second World War, Burma was a major source of various metal ores, particularly wolfram, and lead and zinc ores. She not only met her own needs for oil and oil products, but supplied them to India in large quantities.

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Burma is an ancient country. The first states on her territory appeared in the beginning of the Christian era. In the 11th-13th centuries the ancestors of the modern Burmese formed the Pagan Kingdom in which farming, irrigation, culture and architecture reached a high level of development. Ruins of numerous ancient Buddhist temples dating back to the Pagan Kingdom are still standing and some of them, the Ananda Pagoda for example, are, with good reason, regarded as masterpieces of world architecture.

At the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries Burma was one of the most powerful states in Southeast Asia. Her natural

riches and strategic position between Britain's colonial possessions and in relation to China, had long attracted the attention of British colonialists. In 1824, they launched out on the conquest of Burma but, encountering the resistance of her people, were unable to occupy the country as fast as they had planned. It took three aggressive wars before the British managed to bring Burma under their rule, and only the third, in 1885, ended in the annexion of the whole of Burma. To facilitate administration Britain turned Burma into a province of colonial India.

For decades the Burmese national liberation movement developed and gathered strength. But freedom was won only after the Second World War, as a result of a powerful upsurge of the anti-colonial struggle in the country, in the years of an unprecedented growth of the liberation movements throughout the world. The struggle was guided by the united national front of Burmese liberation forces (established in 1944) personified by the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. The League President was the great patriot and revolutionary democrat of Burma General Aung San, who contributed much to the country's liberation, the organisation of her patriotic forces and the advancement of progressive social aims of development.* Burma proclaimed her independence on January 4, 1948. Under the 1947 Constitution Burma became a republic known as the Union of Burma. In the main, the Constitution was bourgeois-democratic

* Aung San was killed on July 19, 1947, just a few months before Burma became independent, by a member of a reactionary Burmese group which was connected with the imperialists and planned to seize power in the country.

in character and contained concessions to the feudal princes of the national minorities in the outlying areas, which had entered the union as autonomous states (Shan, Kachin and other states).

The history of independent Burma is divided into two stages. The first takes in the period from January 4, 1948 to the beginning of March 1962, that is approximately 14 years. The second begins on March 2, 1962, with the assumption of power by the Revolutionary Council, and is still continuing.

As a result of the balance of forces which took shape in the first stage, a coalition politically represented by the then leadership of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League took power. The national bourgeoisie played the leading role in the coalition. The government also included the feudal princes of the outlying national areas and some petty-bourgeois elements. Following the assassination of Aung San in July 1947, U Nu became President of the League and head of government. Independent Burma began to develop in the socio-economic conditions she had inherited from colonial times. The capitalist structure was predominant, but not very mature. Small commodity production (peasants and artisans) played an important part, and feudal and patriarchal relations prevailed in the outlying areas.

Bourgeois circles came to the forefront primarily as a result of the split in the Left-wing forces (that had occurred just before Burma became independent) which disunited and greatly weakened them, enabling bourgeois elements to unite and take over power. First (in February 1946) there was a split in the Communist Party of Burma. The minority, which broke away, formed the so-called Communist Party of the Red Flag, an

extremist Left-wing insurgent group.* Then, a split between the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League and the Communist Party of Burma, at the end of 1946, led to the latter's expulsion from the League.

It was a great reverse for the Left-wing forces, which sharply undermined their positions in the movement and contributed to the general swing to the right in the League. After the death of Aung San, the relations between the Communist Party of Burma and the new leadership of the League and later with the national government steadily deteriorated.

In the beginning of 1948, the leadership of the Communist Party called this government an agent of imperialism. In March 1948, three months after Burma had won independence, mutual hostility intensified to a still greater extent. The Communist Party of Burma went underground and launched an anti-government uprising. The uprising gathered momentum almost parallel with the spreading separatist insurrection of a part of the Karens, which was incited by the British imperialist circles, and the intervention of the Kuo-mintang forces in the northeastern regions of the Union of Burma, which would have been impossible without the encouragement of the US imperialists.

Regretfully, the young Communist Party of Burma, which was founded in 1939, was unable to put a timely stop to the development of the "Left-wing infantile disorder" in its ranks and allowed it to spread. Today this "infantile disorder" has

* Since then the majority is often referred to as the White Flag Communist Party. This name is unofficial and has no political meaning.

taken a firm hold of the Party, as a result of direct interference of the pro-Peking group, which has installed itself in a leading position in the Communist Party of Burma. This has become a political tragedy for the Communist movement in Burma.

Had it not been for the needless and disastrous splits that fragmented and weakened Left-wing forces in 1946-48, power might perhaps have been taken over by a Left-wing coalition in 1948, which would then have been in a position to advance and implement a progressive programme of socialist orientation, as Aung San had planned and as the Revolutionary Council began to do, some 14 years later.

It would be a mistake, of course, to say that Burma marked time during the first stage. There were definite successes and some valuable measures and reforms were carried out. Burma's independence status acquired firm positions on the international scene. Casting off the remainder of Britain's direct control she began to promote relations with other states, including socialist states, and inaugurated a policy of peace, neutrality and non-alignment. The activity of foreign capital was restricted to some extent and so were large landed estates. The rehabilitation and development of the economy was conducted at a relatively fast rate (though not fast enough), but mainly within the framework of the old colonial structure. A number of positive measures were taken in the areas of education and culture.

Nevertheless, Burma's development at this stage was uneven and contradictory. In some instances there was only an outward show of progress. The situation continued to remain unstable. Moreover, the old problems and contradictions were aug-

mented by new and more acute ones. There was strong pressure from foreign, particularly imperialist capital. Agricultural and industrial production lagged behind the pre-war level right up to 1960, despite efforts to bring it out of the dislocation into which it had fallen during the Second World War. Some branches of the economy were in a state of stagnation, and some remained under the control of the foreign bourgeoisie (particularly the British, and also the Indian and Chinese). Land reform came to a standstill at the initial stage of redistribution of the land and did not prevent the revival of wealthy semi-feudal landowners. On the whole, living standards were lower than before the war. But the upper strata of the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy prospered and the feudal princes in the outlying areas retained their privileges.

Towards the close of the fifties the mainstays of the regime began to sway under the impact of various contradictions. The political leadership fell into corruption and discord. In 1958, the ruling coalition of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League split into two rival factions. The then more moderate faction, led by U Nu, counterposed the faction of Right-wing socialists who intended to establish a most reactionary order. The fierce struggle for power, which flared up between them, caused nation-wide anxiety and threatened to develop into a widespread civil war. In this tense situation, at the close of 1958, the U Nu government was forced to transfer power to a cabinet consisting of representatives of military circles as a provisional (transitional) government. The 1960 parliamentary general elections returned the U Nu group (Union Party) to power. But this government also failed to cope with the

situation, and took a number of steps which only made it worse. In the beginning of the sixties, the separatist movements of the national minorities began to gather momentum. Their reactionary leaders wove plots, and, according to available information, were associated with hostile external forces. The subversive movement of the Shan and other feudal princes was particularly hazardous for the country's unity.

On March 2, 1962, a coup deposed the U Nu government. The 1947 Constitution was suspended, the parliament dissolved and top state officials and politicians were placed temporarily under arrest. The army took over power, in the name of the Revolutionary Council of the Union of Burma, an organisation of top-ranking Burmese army officers headed by its Commander-in-Chief, General Ne Win, who also became head of the new revolutionary (military) government.

The people took no part in the coup. But it cannot be assessed simply as a military putsch, carried out to attain narrow group objectives. The Revolutionary Council began to steer the country along a new road of development. It advanced a programme of broad reforms, envisaging a progressive transformation of the Burmese society and the ultimate achievement of socialism. This programme was formulated in the political declaration *Burmese Way to Socialism*, adopted by the Revolutionary Council on April 30, 1962.

The initiative of the Revolutionary Council proved that the Burmese Army, formed at the beginning of the forties as an army of Burma's liberation from colonialism, still included influential patriotic and revolutionary forces, who had the interests of the country and people at heart. General Ne Win is himself a veteran of the na-

tional liberation movement and Aung San's associate in the fight against the Japanese occupation forces. Needless to say, the military form of development has its negative aspects, since the form influences the content. Conceding this, the Burmese leadership points out that it had no alternative in 1962, and that it is working to form a political vanguard of the revolution—a revolutionary party.

The Burmese Way to Socialism Programme is the main document of the new stage of development. It rejects the system of exploitation of man by man and the road of bourgeois democracy and sets forth a plan of reforms designed to lead towards socialism. According to the Programme, state and co-operative property are the economic foundation of socialism, and the peasants and workers, the working masses are the socio-political mainstay of the socialist state.

Important changes have taken place in Burma in recent years, but it would be an exaggeration to say that everything is going smoothly and successfully. The realisation of the progressive Programme is encountering serious complications and difficulties. Some measures had to be revised and some of a frontal nature had to be abandoned. This is particularly true with regard to the economy, where there is no room for subjectivism, and where miracles do not happen—the more so in a colonial-type economy, which is not only backward but also deformed by colonial rule. Some of the political difficulties are a result of increased armed opposition to the regime of the Revolutionary Council from both the Left- and Right-wing underground. On the whole, however, it can be said that the main lines of the Programme have won the approval of the masses,

that a number of reforms designed to liberate the people from exploitation by the propertied classes and strata have been carried out, and that new horizons have opened before the country.

A distinguishing feature of the new stage of development is a combination of economic, social and political reforms, all of an anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, anti-feudal and anti-capitalist character. In the past few years Burma has strengthened her sovereignty and independence and terminated the activities of subversive ideological and propaganda organisations operated by imperialist powers. What is still more important is that Burma managed to cast off the yoke of imperialist capital. The positions of the Indian and Chinese bourgeoisie, the feudal princes and the wealthy landowners and usurers have been undermined, national private capital has been restricted to a degree and the rights of the working people in town and country have been expanded and strengthened vis-à-vis the exploiter elements.

In 1963, Burma launched the nationalisation of large-scale private property. Having nationalised all foreign and private national banks, the Government gained complete control over the banking resources and could now assign greater sums for economic development and social needs. As a result of the nationalisation of the British oil and mining capital, the state oil industry has been making progress in the past years and, for the first time since the war, Burma has become self-sufficient in oil and is ceasing to import it. Burma has quit the sterling zone, having consolidated the independence of her financial policy. In 1964, the Government completed the nationalisation of foreign trade and nationalised domestic wholesale trade. A number of associations, companies and

enterprises of the manufacturing and mining industries, operated by private national capital, have been nationalised. Whole industries have passed into the hands of the state. Nationalisation embraced not only production, trade, banks and mines, but also transport, schools, cinemas, newspapers, printing offices. A new steeply scaled income tax system has been introduced. The Government also carried out a financial reform—it withdrew large denomination banknotes from circulation, as a measure to prevent persons from possession large cash sums. In 1963-66, the state instituted its monopoly in buying and selling an overwhelming majority of industrial commodities, foodstuffs and raw materials, particularly rice, Burma's main source of wealth. At one time this monopoly extended to 432 different types of commodities, but at the close of 1966, in order to improve supplies to the population and to stimulate production, this number was somewhat reduced. The main enterprises were nationalised as far back as 1963-65, but in subsequent years the Government continued steadfastly to enforce its policy of nationalisation. For example, from December 1968 to June 1969, that is in seven months, approximately 500 cinemas, printing offices and other private enterprises of various sizes were nationalised.

As a result of all these measures, an extensive state sector appeared in Burma's economy. The state controls all key heights in the economy; it is the sole owner of the oil industry, banks, foreign trade, power industry and communications and also the greater part of the mining and construction industries. Moreover, the state sector embraces the largest and most modern branches of the economy and production. According to offi-

cial figures, in the 1969-70 fiscal year, the state and co-operative sectors accounted for about 40 per cent of the gross product (about 53 per cent without agriculture), about 29 per cent of the material production, close to 76 per cent of the mining industry, over 53 per cent of the trade, and 44-45 per cent of the manufacturing industry (the share of the co-operative sector in these branches of the economy ranged from 1 to 6 per cent). Just before the Revolutionary Council came to power (figures for the 1961-62 fiscal year), the state sector accounted for 30 per cent of the gross product and for 20 per cent of the material production. Today over 90 per cent of capital investments are made by the state.

Agriculture is still part (96 per cent) of the private sector, but major changes have taken place in agrarian relations. The Revolutionary Council enacted important legislation, protecting the peasants against landowners and usurers. A law has been passed prohibiting a landowner or usurer from seizing a peasant's land, cattle, dwelling, farm implements or harvest in payment of debts. In the past it was debts that led to the ruin of peasants and to the loss of their land. Under another law control over rents has passed entirely into the hands of the land committees, from which the landowners are banned. In this way the landowners have been deprived of their control over the land they leased, and they could no longer evict leaseholders at will. In 1965, the Revolutionary Council abolished land rent. So the landowners who had leased their land lost their factual (but not legal) rights to the land. Lowering the limit of the amount of land that anyone may own, the Government confiscated a number of estates from wealthy landowners and distributed them

among the landless peasants. In the past few years the number of small farmers tilling plots of up to 20 acres has increased by several hundred thousand. Needless to say, this process cannot be viewed as being wholly positive, since it is partly the result of the absolute growth of the agricultural population. It reflects the fragmentation of farms (sometimes to an even smaller size than economically justified). But it is also clear that another reason for the growth in the number of small farmers has been the abolition of large landed estates whose owners engaged in lease speculations.

The guiding principle of the Revolutionary Council's agrarian policy is that the state is the supreme owner of the land (according to ancient tradition), and, in redistributing it, the state grants it to the peasants as leaseholds, not as private property. This is evidently due to the involved nature of land relations in the country, the state of agricultural production and also the prospect of establishing co-operatives.

Having freed them from domination by usurers, the Revolutionary Government increased state credit to the peasants, making it less expensive and more widely available.

General economic indices have grown following the assumption of power by the Revolutionary Council. In the period from the 1961-62 to the 1969-70 fiscal year there has been an increase in the gross national product (total value of production, trade and services) and material production. All the main branches of the economy have increased production to some extent. State capital investments in economic and social projects are mounting from year to year. The planned investments for the 1969-70 fiscal year were over 82

per cent higher than in 1961-62. Greater attention is being paid to the development of the country's national outlying regions.

Yet the economic situation in the country cannot be regarded as fully satisfactory. The fact of the matter is that following the successful 1964-65 fiscal year production and trade declined. The consequences of this decline still have to be overcome. For instance, the level of agricultural production and trade in the 1968-69 fiscal year was still below the 1964-65 level. Official Burmese data show that while in the period from 1965 to 1970 the country's population increased by 12 per cent, the increase in gross output was only 9 per cent. As a result, production, income and consumption per head of population in the 1969-70 fiscal year were lower than in 1964-65.

This has led to serious breaks in the supply of the population and of production, a growth in unemployment, an expansion of the black market and a rise in prices. According to official Burmese estimates, there has been a considerable rise in the cost of living in recent years.

There are several reasons for this situation: crop failures; the impact of the economic reorganisation; inadequate mobilisation of the working masses for the struggle to boost the economy; sabotage by capitalists; camouflaged resistance from the bureaucratic machinery (which had largely been kept intact); the leading military officials' lack of knowledge and experience in running the economy—they manage the majority of state-owned economic organisations as well as the organs of state authority; the frequent use of military administrative methods in economic management, or commandism, as they call it in Burma. The mounting insurgent movement of the

armed underground, particularly of the Left-wing extremists, is also doing a great deal of harm to the economy. The insurgents have set themselves the task of crippling the Revolutionary Council's measures by annihilating local political and economic bodies, burning the harvest, sabotaging economic projects, and by assassinating local activists who support the Revolutionary Council.

There are also more general aspects of the economic problem which are connected with the forms, the degree and the order of priority of the transformation of the private sector in a weakly developed economy. In countries such as Burma the private sector, which embraces average-sized capitalist and small-scale commodity production (peasants and artisans), plays an important part in the economy. Consequently, its limitation must stem not only from political but also economic considerations. The more a country lags behind in economic development the greater the care and concern for production in all measures bearing on the private sector, for it is impossible to build up a large-scale social economy of the socialist type rapidly in a country with an underdeveloped economy. At the same time revolution is inconceivable without a steady rise in production, especially in industry. Therefore it is particularly important to pursue a rational economic policy with regard to the private sector, a policy which will limit and guide it, and at the same time will enable it to operate normally in those branches and spheres which are essential for the population and the country as a whole.

Some of the measures to transform the Burmese economy were premature (particularly in the years 1964-66) and out of tune with the existing economic conditions (nationalisation of domestic trade;

introduction of a new income tax, which became an obstacle to accumulation in medium-scale private production; and other economic, financial and administrative measures which deprived private production of essential material stimuli). Today small enterprises in the private sector, which have a considerable aggregate production capacity, are standing idle. Private enterprises are closing down, and this at a time when national production is declining.

Raising production is Burma's most acute problem today. It is viewed with concern both by official organisations and the press. At present the situation and the causes that have given rise to it are being carefully analysed, recommendations are made and decisions are being taken. In this connection, the state monopoly on domestic trade was relaxed to some degree at the close of 1966 and the Government has once again lifted the ban on private trade in certain commodities.

Latterly the question of promoting extensive development of co-operation is being treated with increasing urgency in Burma, not only as a basic programme measure (in keeping with the political declaration Burmese Way to Socialism) but also as a practical step to solve a range of economic and social problems. In May 1970, the Revolutionary Council passed the Law for Co-operative Societies. Judging from the content of the new Law and its official interpretation, its purpose is to ensure the fulfilment of a national co-operative plan. The Law envisages the establishment of over 24,000 urban and rural co-operatives, which will embrace more than ten million people, or practically the entire working population*. Ten

* In 1969, Burma's working population was estimated at 10.7 million. It must not be overlooked that in some cases

thousand of these co-operatives will be urban and rural consumer societies (approximately five million members). Another 13,000 will be agricultural producer co-operatives (also approximately five million members), but initially they will be established as consumer and marketing societies. On top of that it is planned to establish a thousand production and about 300 credit co-operative societies (15 thousand and 80 thousand members respectively). With the exception of production co-operatives, all members will have an equal number of shares in their respective societies. The publication of the Law was accompanied by the formation of the Co-operative Council responsible for the fulfilment of the co-operative plan.

In March 1971, draft directives for economic planning in the Union of Burma were published. They provided for the compilation of a 20-year plan. The first of its five parts to be formulated is the four-year plan for 1971/72-1974/75. In this period it is planned to raise the volume of the gross national product by 19 per cent and the per capita income by 8 per cent. The draft directives were approved by the First Congress of the Burmese Socialist Programme Party in July 1971.

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Reforms are under way in other spheres. The majority of private schools, the principal newspapers, a number of printing offices and large cinemas have been nationalised. The system of higher education has been reorganised and orientated primarily towards the training of specialists for

one and the same person (head of a family or its members) can be a member of more than one co-operative.

the economy. In 8 years, beginning with the 1961-62 academic year, the number of college students has more than doubled, and expenditures on higher education went up by more than 300 per cent. The number of pupils in primary schools increased from 1.7 million in 1961-62 to 3.3 million in 1969-70 academic year. Volunteer instructors at abolition-of-illiteracy courses have taught over 300,000 people to read, write and count in the period from 1966 to 1968.

The state-operated health service is expanding. The number of hospitals, doctors and medium-level medical personnel is growing. Workers and peasants are entitled to free medical aid in the state health service.

Fixed minimum wages are paid to an increasing number of industrial and office workers in the state sector of the economy. The system of social insurance is expanding steadily. Working conditions are improving. Workers can now attend evening schools. In the past few years special labour organs set up by the Government dealt with the complaints of thousands of working people against their employers, who had grossly violated their rights for years, refused them holiday pay, sick-pay, or payment for overtime, night shift and other work. Still, the position of the workers in the private sector is on the whole much more difficult than in the state sector.

The headway in the social sphere would have been much more perceptible if the privileges now enjoyed by the working people had not been reduced by economic difficulties, especially by the rising cost of living and increasing unemployment. On the other hand, only a successful solution to the economic difficulties will enable the Government to increase allocations for social needs, bring

social benefits within the reach of a greater number of working people in the towns and particularly in the countryside, where very little has been done so far in this respect.

There is widespread discussion in the country concerning the rights and duties of the working people. The country's leaders, speaking at various conferences and in the press, put forward the thesis that the new rights of the working people should be matched by new duties, and primarily by the duty to work diligently to boost production in the interests of the entire nation. Where labour discipline is maintained at a high level there is a rise in the productivity of labour. This is usually seen at large state-run enterprises. At the same time the Burmese press reports that a great deal has to be put right at small enterprises, where labour discipline is at a low level, with elements of bureaucratism at the top and anarchy below. Conflicts, aggravated by the folding up of production owing to shortages of raw materials, spare parts etc., often erupt in the private sector between the workers and employers. It is now the practice in Burma to laud and encourage the best workers. Each year the names of hundreds of exemplary workers are publicised and the best are awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour.

From 1963, all-Burma seminars (conferences) of peasants and workers were held regularly, the former on the eve of the Peasant's Day, which is observed on the anniversary of the assumption of power by the Revolutionary Council (March 2)*

* The anniversary of the assumption of power by the Revolutionary Council is not observed officially in the country. In keeping with the Council decision, the Peasant's Day, formerly observed on January 1, is celebrated on this date.

and the latter on the eve of the Worker's Day—May 1, international labour day. The seminars, which were usually addressed by top government officials, discussed crucial economic, political and organisational issues concerning the state and the working people. They took place in a business-like and frank atmosphere. The representatives of the peasants and workers talked about the situation in their areas, criticised disorders and came forward with proposals and recommendations. With the establishment of workers' (1968) and peasants' (1969) councils, the above seminars have been replaced by meetings (conferences) of the central organisations of these councils.

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In fulfilling the Burmese Way to Socialism Programme, the Revolutionary Council is putting in a great deal of work to establish a revolutionary party and mass organisations of the working people.

In July 1962, the Council decided to form a Burmese Socialist Programme Party to replace the military council as the political leader of the revolution. At that time the Rules of the Party for the period of its organisation were adopted according to which its formation was to begin with a cadre party or party of functionaries. During this period the principle of centralism was to dominate Party life. The Party was to unite peasants, workers and intellectuals, all those who were confirmed supporters of the Burmese Way to Socialism Programme, who were concerned with the welfare of the people, and who earned their own livelihood and did not exploit the labour of others.

The Burmese Socialist Programme Party began to be established from the top under the guidance of the Revolutionary Council. A Central School of Political Science was opened, which has by now trained thousands of Party organisers, the Party's central bodies and the core of local (over 300 township) and primary organisations were set up and four Party seminars (conferences) were held. Towards the end of 1969 more than 985,000 people applied for Party membership. At the time only 20 people were accepted to full membership, about 260,000 to probationary membership and the rest were regarded as sympathisers. The Fourth Seminar (November 1969) raised the question of transforming the hard-core parts into a mass party of the working people functioning along the lines of democratic centralism. Work was started on drawing up the Party Rules. A large number of probationers were accepted to full Party membership and Party organisations intensified their activity. By the end of May 1971, the number of applications for Party membership exceeded 1,400,000; more than 73,500 people were already Party members (including over 42,000 servicemen), about 330,000 were probationers for Party membership and the rest, over a million, had the status of sympathisers.

The First Congress of the Burmese Socialist Programme Party was held in Rangoon from June 28 to July 11, 1971. It adopted the new Party Rules, enacting its emergence as a mass party, approved the directives for economic planning and elected the Central and Inspection committees. The Central Committee consists of 150 members (of whom 120 are servicemen) and 50 alternate members. The Congress resolved to begin work on drawing up a new constitution for

Burma, to adhere to pursue a foreign policy of strict neutrality and took a number of other decisions. It also seriously discussed economic difficulties. It has been written down in the Congress documents that the Revolutionary Council recognises the Party's leading political role, but that for the time being it will retain full state power. After the constitution is drawn up and adopted, the Revolutionary Council will transfer its authority to the representative body of the people. General Ne Win, Head of the Revolutionary Council and Government, has been elected Chairman of the Party of its Central Committee and of the Executive Committee of the CC. At the Congress the Central Committee made a decision to enlarge the composition of the Revolutionary Council to 15 members by co-opting four civilians, and also to set up a Consultative Body numbering 30 civilians to advise the Revolutionary Council on various matters.

The First Congress of the Burmese Socialist Programme Party was an important event in the life of the country and her peoples. The Central Committee of the CPSU sent a message of greetings to the Congress.

In the latter half of the 1960s the Revolutionary Council and the Party launched the formation of workers' and peasants' councils as new mass organisations of the working people to replace the dissolved trade unions and peasants' unions. The workers' Councils unite wage workers and office employees. The peasants' Councils unite all sections of the tillers of the soil and a part of the agricultural workers. Both the workers' and the peasants' councils are established at primary (enterprise, village), regional (township) and central levels. Two-thirds of the memb-

ership of their guiding committees are elected and a third is appointed by the Revolutionary Council. Their highest bodies are the Central Workers' Council and the Central Peasants' Council. By the middle of 1971 the Workers' Councils had over 1,500,000 and the Peasants' Councils about 6,000,000 members. But the evolution of these councils into independent organisations of the working people designed to defend their rights, boost production and resolve local matters of the collectives, is a more involved problem, whose solution will require a considerable time, particularly in the countryside, where council members are very inactive. It is also necessary to co-ordinate their activity with other official organisations.

Organisations of young people, creative workers and other strata of the population, are also being formed.

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The re-establishment of national unity, reconciliation of Left-wing forces and the fusing of their efforts to further the country's progressive development are issues which are of particular concern for the Revolutionary Council. In 1963, the Council proposed to conduct peace negotiations with each insurgent organisation. These negotiations took place in the latter half of 1963 and included talks with the Communist Party of Burma, the principal force of the armed underground.

It should be said that as far back as 1962 the leadership of the Communist Party of Burma qualified the regime of the Revolutionary Council as reactionary. Nevertheless some of the legal Left-wing functionaries, including those thinking

along Marxist lines and also some of the Communists who had emerged from the underground, supported the Revolutionary Council and spoke up in favour of co-operating with it. In these circumstances the talks between the Revolutionary Council and the Communist Party of Burma could have led to a general change in the country and opened up prospects for re-establishing peace on the domestic scene.

But these hopes were dashed. Despite some initial headway the talks with the Communist Party of Burma collapsed. The talks with other underground organisations, which evidently took their cue from the results of the meeting between the Revolutionary Council and the Communist Party of Burma, also produced no results. Only the talks with a part of the Karen armed movement were successful.

Shortly afterwards, in March 1964, the Revolutionary Council promulgated the National Solidarity Protection Act under which all parties and mass organisations with the exception of those established by the Revolutionary Council (that is the Burmese Socialist Programme Party) were banned. The ban applied to all Left-wing and Right-wing parties and organisations and has resulted in the establishment of a one-party system in the country.

At first it seemed that the collapse of the talks between the Revolutionary Council and the Communist Party of Burma in 1963 was mainly due to the mutual distrust long characteristic of the relations between the Left-wing underground and the official authority. But subsequent developments showed that pro-Peking elements, who had infiltrated the Communist Party leadership and in the beginning of the latter half of the sixties had

subjected it to their influence, positively rejected the very idea of peace negotiations with the Revolutionary Council. In the mid-sixties the pro-Peking leadership of the Communist Party headed by CC Chairman Thakin Than Tun proclaimed a course of armed seizure of power in Burma. This led to an increase in the number of armed acts against the regime of the Revolutionary Council, mounting senseless destruction and casualties among the civilian population. The fact that the talks were, nevertheless, started in 1963, was primarily due to the then still unstable pro-Peking majority, and partly to their own tactical considerations. It was not surprising, therefore, that when in 1967 the Communist Party of Burma began a purge of the Party ranks after the pattern of the Chinese "cultural revolution" the first victim was member of the Politbureau and Secretary of the Party Ko Htay who headed the Party delegation at the talks with the Revolutionary Council. He was accused of treason and revisionism and put to death. After that other leading Party functionaries were executed including Ba Tin (Goshal), a member of the Politbureau, veteran of the Communist movement in the country and a founder of the Party in 1939. The annihilation machinery worked without respite, taking its toll of Party cadres. In 1968, Chairman of the Central Committee Thakin Than Tun was himself executed. In 1944-46, he was the Communist General Secretary of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League and had done much to promote the national liberation and Communist movement in the country. He was killed by his own bodyguard.

The Maoist coup of 1965-67 in the Communist Party of Burma plunged this organisation into a

desperate situation. Its members were demoralised and reviewing and condemning the disastrous course imposed on the Party by the Maoists. Many Communists were emerging from the underground. In 1968 and 1969, the government troops inflicted serious defeats on the Communist Party, routing a number of its strongholds in Central and South Burma and also the headquarters of the Central Committee, with the Central Party School and other institutions. After that the insurgents shifted their activities to the north, particularly to the area near the country's northeast border. At one time the scale of separate operations even grew up. Judging by official reports several clashes took place between the insurgent forces and government troops in the northeast border area in 1970 in the course of which hundreds of insurgents were killed. The insurgent organisations of the Red Flag were also routed and its leader (Thakin So), after almost a quarter of a century of underground activity, was seized by government troops in November 1970.

The developments which have taken place in the communist movement in Burma in recent years may serve as an object lesson for all those forces who either willingly or unwillingly fall under the influence of the Maoists. They show that the Maoists completely disregard the national interests of any country they wish to ensnare in their tentacles. Further proof of this are the actions of the Maoist elements in Burma who were inspired from abroad. In 1967, they organised anti-Burmese provocations in several towns resulting in loss of life and the destruction of property.

As regards insurgent forces of the national minorities, they have also been diminishing of late. In the period from 1968 to 1971, hundreds of

insurgents from among the national minorities have emerged from the underground. They are becoming ever more aware that the armed struggle against the regime of the Revolutionary Council is both harmful and senseless.

Taken at the close of 1968, the decision of the Revolutionary Council to set up the National Unity Advisory Body consisting of representatives of former political parties was imbued with a desire to strengthen unity in the country. The Advisory Body was formed, with 33 members representing both the former legal parties and groupings, among them U Nu, and also Right- and Left-wing opposition forces. It was to draw up recommendations concerning measures to strengthen national unity and suggestions on a new constitution. In May 1969, the Advisory Body terminated its activity. It turned out that different political trends in Burma had failed to draw up a common policy and Right-wing elements (the majority of the Advisory Body) continued to oppose the regime of the Revolutionary Council from positions of bourgeois democracy.

In 1969, Right-wing Burmese emigrants living in Thailand established there a political centre called the Parliamentary Democracy Party. This Party is headed by former Burmese Prime Minister U Nu, who left the country under a plausible pretext and was granted political asylum in Thailand. This Party intends to overthrow the Revolutionary Council regime by force of arms. In May 1970, its leaders came to agreement with some insurgent organisations of the national minorities, especially the Karens, and set up the so-called All Nationals' Liberation Front with Man Ba Zan, the leader of the Karen insurgents as its president.

It follows, therefore, that extreme Right- and Left-wing elements in Burma have to some extent linked up in their desire to continue the struggle against the existing regime and even in the way it should be fought. Yet, it should be stressed, that in view of the mounting defeats of the armed underground and its disintegration from within which has been noticeable of late, it is doubtful whether the Right-wing extremists will have favourable opportunities for organising an effective armed struggle in the country. The peoples of Burma have had their fill of the insurgent tactics of various political forces, as a result of which the country has had no internal peace for over 20 years. There is also no denying the fact that despite economic and other difficulties, the masses in Burma have not lost their confidence in the principal progressive objectives of the Revolutionary Council.

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Having proclaimed a policy of peace and neutrality at the close of the forties, Burma is continuing along this road to this day. It can be said that the policy of neutrality became firmer and more balanced with the Revolutionary Council's rise to power. Burma has good relations with the socialist countries and there are considerable prospects of their all-round expansion and development.

Independent Burma has now been in existence for over two decades. It has made considerable progress, but there is still much to be done. Friends in socialist and newly-free countries wish the Burmese people, advancing along the road of social reforms, every success, and hope that they will bring Burma to economic prosperity and social justice.

THAILAND

The Kingdom of Thailand lies in the centre of the Indochina Peninsula and the northern part of the Malay Peninsula. In the north and the north-east Thailand borders on Laos, in the east on Cambodia, in the west and northwest on Burma and in the south on Malaysia. Thailand, which occupies an area of 514,000 sq km, is slightly bigger than France. Economically and geographically Thailand is divided into four regions: Northern, Northeastern, Central Basin and Peninsula (Southern). Each region has particular features of economic development, connected with its resources.

Thailand has a population of 34,700,000 (est. 1969), the majority living in rural areas. Less than 25 per cent of the population live in cities. The largest city is Bangkok (Krung Thep) with a population of 2,300,000, which is the capital, and the commercial, industrial and cultural centre of the country.

Thailand is a multinational country inhabited by over 30 nationalities, the most numerous of which are the Thai (Siamese) and the Lao, who make up 85 per cent of the total population.

The official language is Thai, a language of the Sino-Tibetan group.

Buddhism, the official religion, plays an important part in the life of the country, and is pro-

fessed by approximately 90 per cent of the population.

Thailand is a parliamentary monarchy. The head of the state is King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX). Executive power is vested in the Council of Ministers, which carries great weight in Thai politics. Thanom Kittikachorn has been Prime Minister since the end of 1963.

The Thai people have an ancient history. Their forebears came from the southwestern provinces of China. The formation of the Thai people started in the main in the 13th-14th centuries A.D. and the Thai state appeared at the same time. It reached the peak of its development in the first half of the 18th century.

Beginning with the middle of the 19th century the colonial powers increased their penetration into Siam.* From 1855 to 1898, Britain, France, the United States and other colonial states imposed unequal, onerous agreements on Siam which turned it into a semi-colony. Nevertheless, Siam managed to remain politically independent. It was situated at the juncture of British and French colonial possessions in Southeast Asia. As neither Britain nor France was willing to let the other get hold of Siamese territory, they both failed to turn it into a colony. In this respect Russia's support played an important part. She was the only country that had no unequal treaties with Siam.

It was only in 1927 that Siam managed to obrogate these unequal treaties, largely because of the upsurge of the national liberation movement in Asia. Nevertheless, right up to the Second World War British imperialism continued to exercise a

* Up to 1939, Thailand was called Siam, a name which was given the Thai state by its eastern neighbours.

decisive influence on Thailand's economy and politics.* After the war Britain tried to re-establish her domination in Thailand but was forced back in the face of the United States opposition.

Thailand is the only Southeast Asian country which did not experience colonisation in its classical form. On the surface it has retained its political independence to this day.

The country's economic development proceeded along the lines of its unequal, subordinate position in the world capitalist economy. This circumstance left its imprint on the structure of the Thai economy, which took shape under the impact of the social division of labour in the capitalist world.

Today Thailand's semi-colonial economy is advancing predominantly along the line of agricultural and raw material production.

Agriculture, which accounts for a third of the gross national product, is the foundation of the Thai economy. The absolute majority (79.7 per cent) of the able-bodied persons is engaged in agriculture, whose principal branch is farming. Rice is the chief product and the staple export. In 1965 and 1966, Thailand exported 1,700,000 and 1,900,000 tons of rice which made it the world's biggest rice exporter. In recent years, however, its rice export has fallen off considerably, and in 1969 amounted to a million tons. Owing to increased demands for Thai agricultural produce in the world capitalist market, Thailand has substantially increased its output of corn, kenaf, jute and sugar cane. Thailand ranks third in the world

* Up to 80 per cent of foreign investments were made by British companies which had for decades concentrated their activities in industries exporting raw materials (tin, teak).

as an exporter of natural rubber, after Malaysia and Indonesia.

The existing system of big landed proprietorship and fragmented land tenure retards the development of agriculture. Pre-capitalist relations are widespread in the Thai countryside. The capitalist mode of production is still weak and the majority of peasant households are engaged in petty goods production.

An inadequate concentration of production and the domination of the lower forms of capitalist enterprise are characteristic of Thailand's industry. An estimated 7.1 per cent of the working population are engaged in industrial pursuits. Industry accounts for a mere 19.2 per cent (est. 1969) of the gross national product.

The mineral resources are extensive and varied, but, with the exception of tin ore and wolfram, they are insufficiently worked. Tin extraction is the principal branch of the mining industry. Thailand holds a leading place in the world for both the reserves and the export of tin. Lately there has been increase in the extraction of lignite, iron ore and some other minerals.

Consumer goods and food factories make up the bulk of the manufacturing industry. In recent years some headway has been made in the development of branches of heavy industry. Among the most important enterprises recently commissioned are a tin factory, which processes all the tin ore mined in the country, a chemical fertilizer factory, a number of small automobile assembly and iron and steel factories, an oil refinery in Si Racha, and cement factories. This has led to a rise in the number of people employed in the manufacturing industry (from 470,000 to 710,000).

Thailand depends greatly on the foreign market, which is its main source of machinery and plant, and its only source of the technical re-equipment and development of the country's industry.

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The post-war history of Thailand falls into two periods, the first from the end of the war to the autumn of 1958, and the second from the end of 1958 to the present day.

A number of changes took place in the country's political life in the first period, which was characterised by an intensified struggle for power between various groupings in the ruling circles. Since Thailand had preserved its political independence, its state machinery gained great power in the process of development and the ruling circles, taking advantage of their administrative posts, promoted their personal interests. This circumstance provided extensive opportunities for the growth of bureaucratic capital. Therefore, the struggle for the right to control the treasury became one of the causes of the frequent government coups. And it cannot be ignored that the political development of the country at that time was accompanied by the increasing influence of the United States, which sought to turn Thailand into its military-strategic bridgehead in Southeast Asia.

In the first post-war years the political and economic difficulties engendered by the war sharply intensified the class struggle. Manifesting their discontent with the existing conditions, the workers and peasants undertook mass action. Petty-bourgeois democrats, who, during the war, had

taken a vigorous part in the anti-Japanese movement, stepped up their activities. In the 1946 elections to the People's Assembly—consisting of the Chamber of Representatives (the Lower House) and the Senate (Upper House)—the majority of the seats was won by representatives of the democratic circles of the national bourgeoisie, which formed a Government headed by Pridi Phanomyong. The new Government effected certain democratic changes: it legalised progressive parties, abolished the anti-communist law, adopted a new Constitution, which, in particular, abolished the practice of the King nominating a certain category of members of parliament. In January 1947, Thailand re-established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.* Established in 1942, the Communist Party of Thailand, after emerging from the underground in 1946, increased its activity and came out with a broad programme of struggle for liberating the country from imperialist oppression, granting democratic rights to the working people and improving their living conditions. An All-Thailand Federation of Trade Unions, which was formed in 1947, organised a number of major workers' strikes in Bangkok. The workers' economic and political struggle was accompanied by a growth of anti-feudal actions undertaken by broad sections of the peasantry.

Incensed by all this, the wealthy bourgeoisie and landowners, who had always wanted to crush the working class and peasant movement in the

* Diplomatic relations between the USSR and Thailand were established in 1941, but the exchange of diplomatic representatives did not take place because of Hitler Germany's attack on the Soviet Union and the beginning of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the nazi invaders.

country, formed a reactionary bloc (which also included monarchists) with the support and financial assistance of the United States.

The Thammatipat Party established by the army elite became the bulwark of the reactionary forces. In November 1947, top army officers staged a coup, which put the monarchists into power. After just a few months in office, the Government acceded to an ultimatum by a group of top army officers with the result that power in the country passed into the hands of the bourgeois-landowner bloc, in which the army elite headed by Marshal Pibulsonggram played the leading part.

Enforcing a domestic policy designed to suppress the democratic movement in the country, the Government banned all progressive parties and organisations.

This anti-democratic course was vigorously supported by the United States. In September-October 1950, Thailand and the United States signed an agreement on military and economic aid and technical co-operation, which plunged Thailand into still greater dependence on United States imperialism. In 1950, Thailand took part in the Korean War on the side of the interventionists, and the Thai Government imposed sanctions on trade with the socialist countries. In 1952, the People's Assembly passed an anti-communist law. In 1954, Thailand joined SEATO and became one of its most active members and shortly afterwards SEATO set up its headquarters in Bangkok.

These Government measures intensified the political struggle on the domestic scene. The movement of broad sections of the population in defence of peace and for the abolition of the United States control, increased in scope. There were

mass demonstrations and strikes in support of demands for democratic reforms and a change in the foreign policy.

Forced to manoeuvre in this involved situation, the Pibulsonggram administration became more flexible on certain domestic and foreign policy issues, without, however, giving up its pro-US policy. A delegation from Thailand attended the Bandung Conference of Asian and African States in 1955. In 1956 the Government lifted the embargo on trade with the socialist countries and carried out a number of reforms: removed the ban on political parties and organisations (with the exception of the Communist Party) and in 1956 passed labour legislation allowing strikes. Though very limited in nature these measures, nevertheless, invigorated political activity and stimulated the growth of the democratic movement. The new political parties that came into being, and some of the old ones that resumed their activity, demanded Thailand's withdrawal from SEATO and the adoption of an independent foreign policy. In the sphere of domestic policy they insistently called for a land reform, measures to stimulate the national economy and the abolition of the anti-communist law.

In these conditions the 1957 elections to the People's Assembly further intensified the political struggle. The majority of parliamentary seats were won by representatives of the petty and middle bourgeoisie who formed a powerful opposition to the ruling group.

Greatly disturbed by this increase in the anti-imperialist movement in Thailand, the United States resorted to political pressure, causing a fresh wave of protest from various sections of the Thai society.

In these circumstances a split in the ruling group became manifest. Pibulsonggram and his supporters were inclined to introduce certain changes into the Government's political line which met with opposition from the Right-wing group, headed by Defense Minister Sarit Thanarat.

This group made a deal with US imperialism, and on the night of September 16, 1957, army officers, led by Sarit Thanarat, carried out a coup for the purpose of continuing the pro-US policy and suppressing the movement for neutrality in the country. Headed by the former Thai ambassador to the United States, Pote Sarasin, the new Government ordered parliamentary elections to be held in December 1957, after which General Thanom Kittikachorn representing top army officers became Head of Government. Fearing an eruption of popular indignation, the Government proclaimed a state of emergency. In the sphere of foreign policy the ruling circles intended to expand their alliance with the United States and continue Thailand's participation in SEATO.

The country was experiencing serious economic difficulties caused by a decline in production of the export branches. Tin, rubber and rice exports fell sharply and thousands of workers lost their jobs. Thailand was also beset by grave financial difficulties. Its internal and foreign debts totalled 8,000 million bahts; the 1957 budget had a deficit of 1,200 million bahts. The efforts of the Kittikachorn administration to cover the deficit with a new loan from the National Bank of Thailand failed. To counter the growing economic difficulties the Government raised taxes and import duties and thus further lowered living standards.

The result was a fresh upsurge in the people's struggle. On the first of May, 1958, the working

people organised a mass demonstration with slogans calling for genuine political independence and an independent foreign policy. At the same time there was an increase in mass action in opposition to United States' interference in Thailand's internal affairs, against the country's participation in SEATO and for the adoption of a policy of non-alignment.

Assessing the situation as a threat to its interests the United States put its main stake on the army elite, headed by Sarit Thanarat. On October 20, 1958, the leaders of the army group staged a coup, dissolved parliament, abolished the constitution and banned political parties and progressive organisations. A military dictatorship was established in the country. In 1959, a provisional constitution was adopted which consolidated the power of the military group and vested the Government headed by Sarit Thanarat with unlimited powers. A wave of unbridled anti-communist hysteria, political terror and suspicion flooded the country. Thanarat's course was one of isolating Thailand from the socialist countries. The Government's foreign policy and its activity as a whole were characterised by vigorous participation in SEATO and submission to US imperialism. The Thai ruling circles expanded their co-operation with the United States; Thailand gave greater backing to US interference into the internal affairs of Laos and stepped up its military ventures on the Cambodian border which resulted in the rupture of diplomatic relations with Cambodia in 1961.

In March 1962, the United States and Thailand signed an agreement under which the United States promised to help Thailand "resist communist aggression" and "subversive activity". In line

with this agreement and the SEATO provisions, the United States launched the construction of military installations (air bases, airfields, military depots, ports) in Thailand and brought its troops into the country.

In their internal policy, the Thai ruling circles pursued the line of continuing the country's development along capitalist lines. The Government, which was not in a position to ignore the demands and wishes of the Thai bourgeoisie to expand and strengthen their positions in the economy, launched an economic policy oriented primarily on meeting the class interests of the bourgeoisie. So the establishment, in 1959, of the Industrial Finance Corporation, the institution of control over foreign trade (including the introduction of protective customs tariffs), the adopting of a six-year development plan for 1961-66 and a five-year plan for 1967-71 and other measures were aimed at accelerating the country's capitalist development, the growth of national private capital and the extension of its sphere of application. The policy of the ruling circles aimed at providing privileges for the entry of foreign capital into Thailand, is intertwined with the general line of encouraging private enterprises.

Since 1958, there has been a marked increase in the concentration of capital in the hands of the Thai bourgeoisie. Monopolisation of capital is growing in the sphere of circulation. Newly-formed syndicates unite companies with foreign, as well as with local capital. Talking of monopoly associations, it should be noted that from the very outset they have been operating in close contact with the bureaucratic upper stratum and bureaucratic capital.

It was the growth of bureaucratic capital that largely enabled the wealthy bourgeoisie to strengthen its positions.

Bureaucratic capital appeared as a result of the misappropriation of considerable sums from the treasury by the ruling group—an old practice in Thailand. The scandal involving ex-Prime Minister Sarit Thanarat, who had misappropriated 4,000 million bahts (\$ 200 million) from the state treasury is a striking example of this fraudulent practice.

Thus, after the 1958 coup, the growth of national capitalism became a fairly rapid process, developing in conditions of Thailand's continued economic dependence on imperialism and the increased activity of foreign capital in its economy. During the past decade the inflow of foreign capital has increased to a considerable extent. While in the period from 1951 to 1958, foreign capital investments rose by \$ 24 million (from \$ 140 million to \$ 164 million), in the following eight years they mounted by \$ 355 million to total \$ 519 million by the end of 1966. An appraisal of the country's balance of payments showed that foreign capital investments in the period 1967-69 totalled to approximately \$ 268 million. A particularly large increase was registered by United States, Japanese and West German capital. Investments by US firms rose from \$ 27 million in 1961 to \$110 million by the middle of 1967. By the end of 1968, they amounted to \$ 200 million, considerably surpassing British investments which had previously held first place.

The establishment of mixed companies, with the participation of national (including state) capital, has become the most widespread form of foreign investment. The founding of mixed com-

panies is primarily a method of stimulating private capitalist enterprise, both national and foreign. Japanese monopolies show the greatest inclination towards this type of co-operation with the national bourgeoisie. Firms of the USA, Britain, West Germany, Denmark and other countries also take part in mixed enterprises. At the same time the imperialist countries' policy of co-operating with the national capital in Thailand does not mean that they have changed the substance of their investment policy in the country. This is shown by figures. In the period 1961-66 alone the profits taken out of the country by foreign companies amounted to 2,600 million bahts and exceeded the flow of direct investments by 500 million bahts. Taking into account the payments made to private creditors, the "services" rendered by foreign private capital in that period cost Thailand more than 4.6 million bahts.

In partnership with local capital, foreign monopolies are establishing still closer links with the Thai bourgeoisie and are thus expanding their social base, not to mention other no less important privileges which become available to foreign capital. It should be borne in mind, however, that the growth of the national bourgeoisie and the consolidation of its economic positions are liable to provoke contradictions with imperialism and to stimulate the growth of nationalistic sentiments among the Thai bourgeoisie.

Subsidies and credits granted on an inter-governmental basis, the bulk of which was provided in the sixties, have become the most important form of exporting foreign capital, enabling the imperialist states to effect their neo-colonialist policy in Thailand.

The country's chief creditors are the United States, West Germany, Japan and also the US-controlled International Reconstruction and Development Bank which, since 1950 had granted 19 long-term credits to the sum of \$ 311,900,000 principally to help Thailand develop its infrastructure.

US "aid" began to flow systematically into the country beginning in 1950, following the conclusion of the US-Thailand agreement on technical, economic and military "aid". From 1950 to June 1966, US "aid" to Thailand totalled \$ 1,031,100,000 of which \$ 544,100,000 was military aid and \$ 487,000,000 economic. In the 1967-68 fiscal year US military aid to Thailand was fixed at \$ 60 million and economic, not counting credits from the US Export-Import Bank, at \$ 40 million. Non-repayable subsidies for the development of non-military branches of the economy comprise a mere 18 per cent of the total value of US "aid" to Thailand. At the same time almost 57 per cent of all the US "aid" goes to strengthen the country's police. In the 1967 fiscal year, for example, of the \$ 53 million of the US "aid" to Thailand, \$ 36.1 million were expended for this purpose. In 1967, US military aid, including the construction of strategic roads, airfields, ports and so forth, added up to \$ 60 million. The US is building up its military strength in Thailand in keeping with what appears to be a long-term programme. Annual US expenditure on military construction in Thailand, which has been turned into what can only be called the Okinawa of Southeast Asia, adds up to \$ 200 million.

In July 1970, there were 42,000 US troops, including 30,000 airforce personnel, in Thailand. The majority of them are concentrated at the US-

built bases at Khorat, Ubon, Ta Khli and Udon, at a B-52 bomber base of U Taphao and in the large port complex of Sattahip in the Gulf of Siam.

Under pressure of the United States, Thailand sent 12,000 troops to South Vietnam and became directly involved in the aggression. More than 5,000 Thai mercenaries are taking an active part in military operations in Laos.

Following the coup in Cambodia and the deposing of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who had pursued a neutral policy, Thailand and Cambodia re-established diplomatic relations, broken off nine years ago. Moreover, Thailand joined the US interventionists and their Saigon puppets in the aggression against the Cambodian people. The Thailand Government made a decision to dispatch "volunteer detachments" to Battambang and Siem Reap in Cambodia,* and reinforcements are being hurriedly prepared in the country for action in Cambodia. Thai "volunteers" are being trained after the fashion of US "green berets" at Prachin Buri, some 100 miles northeast of Bangkok, for subversive operations against Cambodian patriotic forces. On top of that 2,000 Cambodian army recruits are undergoing an intensive four months' training course in Surin, 200 miles northeast of the Thai capital.

Thailand has already set up three airforce control points in the northeast of the country for communications with the Thai airforce planes flying reconnaissance missions over Cambodia. These posts relay reconnaissance information ob-

* With the help of Japan, on whose side Thailand had fought during the Second World War, Thai troops had occupied these regions at the beginning of the 1940s.

tained by the pilots to the Cambodian military authorities. In addition, Thai Air Force planes are on 24-hour patrol duty over the Thai-Cambodian frontier.

The railway between Thailand and Cambodia was being modernised and negotiations were in progress in Bangkok between the railway administrations of the two countries on the resumption of traffic along this railway, which has been suspended for a number of years.

On the orders of the US imperialists, the Thai authorities have handed over a large quantity of weapons and materiel to the Phnom Penh regime.

Operating from bases on the Thai territory, the US Air Force conducts many provocations against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Laos and bombs towns and villages in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

A short while ago Thailand proposed to establish a military group consisting of itself, Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam to promote closer co-operation between the countries of Indochina. The idea behind the proposal is not to have the group replace SEATO, but to set up yet another aggressive bloc, in order to put down the national liberation movement in that part of the world.

Clearly the Thai authorities are dragging their country still deeper into the US imperialists' dangerous venture in Southeast Asia.

Thailand's support for the aggressive US policy in Southeast Asia conforms to the general anti-communist line of the present Thai Government. Anti-communism is the principal feature of the policy pursued by the Thai authorities who, far from trying to conceal this, openly advertise their hostility towards communism. They have taken advantage of the war in Vietnam to militarise the

country's economy and have turned the growing allocations for military needs, strategic construction and the US economic and military "aid" into a source of personal enrichment for the upper-echelon Thailand bourgeoisie.

The war in Vietnam led to a boom in Thailand's economic activities, enabling the authorities to establish closer relations with various sections of the national bourgeoisie and thus to consolidate the foundation of their rule in the country.

On the basis of the new constitution, elections were held on February 10, 1969, to the Thai People's Assembly which had been dissolved since the 1958 coup. A mere 39 per cent of the electorate went to the polls. 67.4 per cent of the seats in the House of Representatives to which 218 deputies had been elected, were won by the ruling United Thai People's Party (Sakha Pracha Thai), headed by the present Prime Minister, Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn who took over the post in December 1963, following the death of Sarit Thanarat, and the independents, whose candidates were members of the League of Free People, an anti-communist organisation headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Internal Affairs General Praphas Charustathien. The rest were won by other parties with 56 seats going to the Democratic Party (Prachatipatai), which according to the Thai press "is in opposition" to the Government. The Party centres its criticism on domestic problems, but has a generally favourable opinion of the Government's foreign policy. Since the Government's programme declaration is not subject to parliamentary approval, and the ministers are not members of either the House of Representatives or the Senate, it is clear that it is not the parliament that controls the activity of

the Government but, on the contrary, the military-administrative machinery that controls the elected bodies. Moreover, the Chairman of the Lower House of parliament is a representative of the ruling United Thai People's Party Major-General Siri Sirivothin.

Judging by the composition of the new parliament and the new Government, headed by Thanom Kittikachorn, the extreme Right-wing forces hold very strong positions in politics. The domination of the military-civilian bureaucracy rests on the traditional administrative machinery and on the army. Another important factor is that the Anti-communist Act, which gives unlimited rights to punitive bodies, is still operative, and any manifestation of discontent with the existing despotic regime is crushed under this notorious law.

Yet, despite the martial law and brutal repressions, a partisan movement, aimed at the overthrow of the present regime, is spreading in the country. It was initiated on November 1, 1964, when the Movement for the Independence of Thailand was formed. Two months later, on January 1, 1965, the Patriotic Front was organised and in November of that year it was announced that the Movement for the Independence of Thailand had joined forces with this Front. The first battle fought by the Front's troops took place on August 7, 1965, in the vicinity of Nakse, in the northeastern part of the province of Nakhom Pathom. Today, guerillas are active in 31 of the country's 71 provinces. Their number is not large, something over 5,000 people, and they operate mainly in the northeast of Thailand. The Thai Government attempts to take advantage of the guerilla movement to justify the presence of the

US troops in the country, to keep the martial law in force and to obtain as much aid from the United States as possible. Needless to say US imperialism is doing everything it can to help suppress the guerilla movement.

The US troops do not participate directly in operations in the northeast of the country, where government forces are fighting the guerillas. But the US military authorities are furnishing the Thai army with helicopters for airlifting the troops to these areas, and instructors from the US special forces are teaching the Thai army methods of anti-guerilla jungle warfare. CIA specialists in the methods of putting down insurgent movements have been transferred to Thailand. All this increases US interference in the country's internal affairs.

In the light of the above it is obvious that the second period (from 1958 to the present day) of Thailand's post-war history is characterised by its increasing political and military dependence on the United States. In these conditions the people of Thailand find it ever more difficult to fight against the domination of US imperialism and for turning Thailand into a genuinely independent, neutral and democratic state.

FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA

The Federation of Malaysia consists of two parts, West and East Malaysia which are separated by a 700 kilometre stretch of the South China Sea. West Malaysia covers the greater part of the Malay Peninsula and borders on Thailand in the north and Singapore in the south. East Malaysia occupies the northern part of Kalimantan. In the east it borders on Indonesia and in the west on Brunei.

The Federation covers an area of 332,000 sq km and has a population of 10,900,000 (est. 1970) of whom 9,300,000 (85 per cent) live in West Malaysia, which is the political, economic and cultural centre of the whole country, and 1,600,000 (15 per cent) in East Malaysia.

Malaysia is a multinational state, the Malays making up 45 per cent of the population, Chinese 33 per cent and Indians 10 per cent. The high percentage of the Chinese and Indian population is due to the historic and economic features of the country's development. The majority of the Chinese and Indians residing in Malaysia today are descendants of the Chinese and Indian immigrants, who came at the close of the 19th century and particularly in the first decades of the 20th century when British capital launched intensive exploitation of the country. In time some of them

returned to China and India but the rest took up permanent residence in Malaysia. The immigrants, who kept arriving in the country did not become assimilated with the local population and preserved their own languages, customs and national culture. Even territorially they did not settle in places inhabited by Malays. The majority of the Indians and Chinese concentrated in areas of plantations and tin mines and in towns. The majority of Malays live in villages or *kampongs*, where they engage in the traditional cultivation of rice. Only a small percentage live in towns.

One of the reasons why the non-Malays could not settle at will was the laws operating in Malay principalities on "Malayan Reservations", regions where only Malays were allowed to own land.

The national composition of the Malaysian population and its territorial separation gave rise to a number of specific problems which have greatly influenced the country's political, and socio-economic development.

Malaysia's state structure, which owes its characteristic features to the country's colonial past, distinguishes it from other Southeast Asian countries.

The history of Malaysia and Singapore, which is closely connected with it, goes back far into the ages.

In the beginning of the Christian Era the first states, situated at the intersection of the sea trade routes from India to China, appeared in West Malaysia (Malaya). From the 8th to 13th century, Malaya was part of the Sumatran Empire of Srivajaya. In the 15th century, the Malacca Kingdom, one of the best-known Southeast Asian states, was formed in Malaya. It was a powerful feudal state with well-developed trade and a

magnificent culture. In the epoch of the Malacca Kingdom (15th century-beginning of the 16th century) Islam became the dominant religion in Malaya.

In 1511, the Portuguese colonialists destroyed the Malacca Kingdom and seized the town of Malacca, which became the citadel of European colonialism in Malaya. The country split up into a number of feudal principalities, the biggest of which was Johore, in the southern part of the peninsula.

Asserting themselves in Malaya, at the close of the 18th century, the British colonialists occupied the island of Singapore in 1819, and made it the centre of their possessions in Malaya. In the period from the seventies of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century Britain occupied the Malay principalities and established the colony of British Malaya. At the same time it asserted its rule in North Kalimantan, now East Malaysia. Here, in the campaign started in the forties of the 19th century, it subjugated Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah and, in effect, turned them into its colonies.

The British preserved the institution of traditional Malay rulers, sultans, as a means of preventing the rise of anti-British movements by the peasants, who made up the bulk of the population of Malaya.

Resisting enslavement, the population of Malaysia frequently rebelled against the colonialists.

In the beginning of the 20th century, the country became Britain's agrarian and raw materials appendage, a source of rubber and tin. This led to the appearance of the local bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the Chinese and Indians making up the majority of these classes.

A national liberation movement began to spread in Malaya after the First World War and the October Socialist Revolution in Russia. With the formation of the Communist Party of Malaya in 1930, the strike movement of the proletariat and anti-imperialist manifestations in Singapore and the Malay Peninsula became particularly acute. Despite repressions by the colonial authorities, the working class and anti-imperialist movement had made considerable headway by the close of the 1930s.

Right up to the outbreak of the Second World War, or to be more precise, up to Japan's occupation of the peninsula at the beginning of 1942, present-day West Malaysia and Singapore were a single British colony known as British Malaya, though their administration was somewhat different in form. Singapore, the Island of Penang, Province Wellesley and Malacca were a crown colony, called the Straits Settlements, while the sultanates of the Malay Peninsula were protectorates. This distinction did not impede the development of a united, closely connected national liberation and working-class movement in both parts of Malaya.

It should be noted that the national liberation movement in Malaya developed in close contact with the revolutionary struggle of the population of China and reflected both its strong and weak sides. The leading part in the Communist Party of Malaya was played by representatives of the Chinese working class in the country.

During the Japanese occupation of Malaya, which began early in 1942 and ended in September 1945, Communists in Malaya organised resistance to the new enslavers. The Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army and the Malayan Peo-

ple's Anti-Japanese Union, a mass civilian organisation on which the army relied, were formed, and democratic reforms were carried out in the liberated regions.

Returning to Malaya after the war the British colonialists began to restore their domination, which had been shaken during the years of Japanese occupation. In a move to strengthen their political positions and increase the economic exploitation of the country the British imperialists early in 1946 reorganised the state structure of Malaya by uniting their possessions in the Malay Peninsula into the centralised Union of Malaya under the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs and depriving the sultans of their pre-war privileges. In view of the strategic significance of Singapore, turned by the British into a major naval base, and its important role in the Malayan national liberation movement, the British made it a separate colony. An important aspect of the 1946 reform was the granting of citizenship rights to all people born in the Malay Peninsula and Singapore and the simplification of the procedure for granting citizenship. This gave the non-Malayan population equal rights with the Malaysians. Depriving of the sultans of their privileged status, and the easier granting of citizenship rights to the non-Malayan population evoked protest from the sultans and other upper sections of the Malayan community.

Representatives of these sections of the Malayan community formed a number of political organisations whose main objective was to fight against the Union of Malaya. In March 1946, they merged into the United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), a party patterned along national lines. It was founded by a prominent Malayan national-

ist functionary Onnbin Jaafar, a relation of the Sultan of Johore and the owner of large rubber plantations.

The Malayan aristocracy, employed in the British colonial administration played the leading role in this party. The party membership also included village teachers, minor clerks and other representatives of the Malayan intelligentsia.

Democratic forces in Malaya in their turn justifiably assessed the 1946 constitutional reform as an attempt to re-establish direct British domination in their country. A mass protest movement began to develop in Malaya. Heading the anti-British actions were the Communist Party and associated democratic organisations, above all the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, established in February 1946.

In December of the same year the Communist Party initiated the formation of a united national liberation front called the All-Malayan Council of Joint Action and took an active part in its work. Following the formation of the Malayan United Front in February 1947, the All-Malayan Council of Joint Action merged with this organisation to form the People's United Front (PUTERA). The Front included the Communist Party, the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions and other democratic organisations which it guided, and also parties and organisations of the urban and petty bourgeoisie. The PUTERA organised a series of mass anti-British campaigns, the most important of which was the October 1947 general political strike.

Apprehensive of the extent of the liberation struggle, the colonialists arrived at a compromise with the Malayan aristocracy and the UMNO leaders. The talks between the representatives of

the British Government, on the one hand, and the representatives of the Malayan aristocracy and the UMNO leaders, on the other, produced new draft of the state arrangements providing for the establishment of the less centralised Federation of Malaya to replace the Union of Malaya. Full executive authority was concentrated in the hands of the British High Commissioner, directly subordinate to the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs. The High Commissioner could veto the laws passed by the Legislative Council of the Federation of Malaya which consisted of the High Commissioner (chairman), 14 federal government officials, nine Chief Ministers of the Malay Principalities (States) and 50 British-nominated members representing planters, commercial and industrial circles, trade unions and so forth. The national composition of the Legislative Council was as follows: 31 Malays, 14 Chinese, five Indians, seven Europeans not employed in the public service and 15 British officials from the state administration, one Ceylonese and one Eurasian.

The High Commissioner had the Federal Executive Council with consultative functions under him. Apart from the High Commissioner who had the final say in all matters, the Council consisted of seven officials of the colonial administration and seven members not in the employ of the federal government. The Chief Secretariat, which supervised the functions of the various ministries, was directly subordinate to the High Commissioner.

As a concession to the sultans, the Council of Rulers consisting of nine sultans was established. Nominally no changes could be made in the constitution or the immigration policy and no appointments could be made to high government

posts without the Council's approval. Having enlisted the support of the elite of the Malay community, influential among the politically backward Malayan peasants, the colonial authorities resorted to military methods of suppressing the democratic forces. Before dealing a blow at the Communist Party, the British administration promulgated a law in June 1948, under which the biggest mass organisation of the working people, the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, was dissolved. On June 18 of the same year, a state of emergency was proclaimed in the country and on July 23, the Communist Party and other progressive organisations were banned. Mass arrests of Communists and sympathisers followed. But the colonialists failed to crush the national liberation movement with repressive measures. Drawing on the experience of guerrilla warfare against the Japanese invaders, the Communist Party and other democratic organisations, including the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, went underground and raised guerilla detachments which started war against the British. In February 1949, these detachments were united into the National Liberation Army. Though the British concentrated considerable military forces in Malaya and executed many leaders of the communist and trade union movement and resorted to the most brutal punitive measures against the civilian population which supported the partisans, they were unable to crush the resistance forces by military means.

Failing to crush the national liberation movement by force of arms, the colonialists undertook an attempt to split the trade union and democratic movement. A new trade union centre—the Malaysian Trade Union Congress—which proclaimed

"non-interference in the political struggle" as one of its principles, was formed in February 1949. By confining the Congress activity to the framework of a purely economic struggle, the British imperialists hoped to prevent it from merging with the political struggle, and consequently deprive progressive political parties and organisations of the mass support of the trade unions. The Chinese bourgeoisie joined the British imperialists in their fight against the national liberation fighters. A new party, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) was set up in February 1949, on the basis of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and like the UMNO, was patterned along national lines. The party recognised the "special rights" of the Malays and in every way demonstrated its loyalty to the existing order in the country.

A very important role in the national liberation movement in those years was played by Chinese peasants—squatters, the majority of whom were former plantation and tin-mine workers and also town dwellers who, during the depression years of 1929-33 and during the Japanese occupation, had moved to the fringe of the jungle and made their living by cultivating vegetables and rice. With the re-establishment of British rule in Malaya after the war the colonialists began to oppress these peasants, taking the view that they were cultivating their plots illegally. Deeply incensed by the attitude of the British authorities, the squatters actively participated in the guerilla warfare, supplying the guerillas with money and food and furnishing them other assistance. They also joined the National Liberation Army. To deprive the Army of this support the colonialists in 1950 commenced the forcible resettlement of

the squatters to "new settlements", specially organised reservations surrounded by barbed-wire fences and kept under constant police surveillance. By 1954, some 650,000 Chinese had been moved to more than 550 settlements. The settlements were fairly large and many had about 1,000 and even more people living in them. To induce the settlers to break away from the Communists, the colonialists granted them certain rights to the land allotted to them in the settlements. Subsequently, they provided the settlements with a minimum of communal facilities and opened schools which operated under the supervision of the colonial authorities. During this period the Malaysian Chinese Association stepped up its activity and tried to bring the settlers under its influence with various benevolent handouts. Towards the end of 1953, the British command gradually began lifting the restrictions it had imposed during the state of emergency in various regions where the population was considered to be loyal to the authorities. This was first done in the western and northeastern regions of the peninsula, partly in Perak Principality and in the greater part of Perlis Principality. This, however, did not mean that emergency regulations could not be re-imposed the moment the colonialists considered it necessary. It follows, therefore, that from the time the emergency legislation was introduced in 1948 to the middle of 1955, when the first elections were held to the Legislative Council of the Federation of Malaya, the British had enforced a policy of the carrot and the whip to establish an order of things in the country that enabled British monopolies to exploit Malaya and rake in profits.

During that period Britain carried out its polit-

ical measures with the help of its excellently equipped army, well trained in jungle warfare (including contingents from Australia and New Zealand) and with brutal emergency regulations, including deportation of undesirable persons.

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In the beginning of the fifties political parties began to play a bigger part in the political activity in the country. Above all this applied to the United Malay National Organisation. The concessions obtained from the British in the matter of restoring the privileges of the Malay sultans, who, in their turn, persistently strove to uphold the "special rights" of the Malays, increased this party's political influence in the Federation. Suffice it to say that almost all the Malays nominated by the British authorities to the Legislative Council in 1948 were either the UMNO members or sympathisers. Proof of the UMNO's growing influence was the Malay sultans' acceptance of the demands to consult with the UMNO leadership before nominating the Chief Ministers of Malay states.

After the Union of Malaya had been succeeded by the Federation of Malaya and the sultans had been re-established in their former rights, that is, after the UMNO had achieved its principal objective, the party was faced with the task of working out a programme for further action. The goal pursued by party president Onnbin Jaafar was the achievement of independence. Taking account of the fact that the party, patterned along national lines, could not win independence from the British without the support of the Chinese and Indian bourgeoisie, who held strong positions in plantation production, tin mining, and even more in

commerce, Jaafar proposed that non-Malays should be admitted to party membership. This, and a number of other political demands he put forward, were viewed with disapproval by the sultans and influential UMNO leaders. In September 1951, Jaafar resigned his presidential post, quit the party and formed the Independence of Malaya Party. The leadership of the UMNO passed into the hands of Sultan of Kedah's brother, Abdul Rahman.

In the early fifties the colonialists were forced to make a number of political concessions, consisting of the gradual introduction of some bourgeois parliamentary institutions in the country. In 1952, for example, the first elections to the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council were held. The chief opponent of the UMNO and the Malaysian Chinese Association at the elections was Onnbin Jaafar's Independence of Malaya Party, which accepted any person over the age of 18 regardless of nationality, provided he had lived in Malaya for not less than 10 years. As a measure to prevent this Party from winning the 1952 Kuala Lumpur municipal elections and the consequent loss of membership of the UMNO and the Malaysian Chinese Association to the Independence of Malaya Party, the leaders of the UMNO and the Malaysian Chinese Association decided to nominate common candidates, with the result that their coalition won nine out of the 11 seats in the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council, only two seats falling to the Independence of Malaya Party. In subsequent municipal elections the UMNO and the Malaysian Chinese Association acted the same way.

At a joint congress in August 1953, the UMNO and the Malaysian Chinese Association demanded

that Britain should permit the election of the majority in the Legislative Council and grant the Federation independence within the British Commonwealth. In April 1954, the British authorities agreed that out of 92 members of the Legislative Council there should be 52 elected members, and set the elections for July 1955. In 1954, in preparing to the election campaign, the UMNO and the Malaysian Chinese Association included a third party into their coalition, the Malaysian Indian Congress, which had been formed in 1946 and reflected the interests of a part of the Indian community (the bourgeoisie, intellectuals and, to some extent, the trade unions). This coalition, made up of the three leading communal parties of the Federation, came to be known as the Alliance Party. A characteristic feature of this coalition was that each party was patterned along national lines. Controversial issues were debated behind closed doors. But publicly the Party adhered to a single programme. At the July 1955 elections to the Legislative Council the Alliance Party won 51 of the 52 seats. The majority of the elected deputies were the UMNO members. Of the 51 members from the Alliance Party, 34 were Malays, 15 Chinese, one Indian and one Ceylonese. One seat in the Legislative Council was won by the petty-bourgeois Pan-Malayan Islamic Party. Founded in 1951 along national-religious lines, it was influential in the northeastern regions of the Federation of Malaya. Following the July elections the Federation was granted internal self-government. Abdul Rahman, leader of the most influential party of the coalition, formed a cabinet in which the senior ministerial posts (Chief Secretary, Finance Minister and Procurator General) remained in the hands of the British. Abdul Rahman became

Chief Minister, and the leader of the Malaysian Chinese Association was given the post of Transport Minister. The cabinet also included five more Malays, two more Chinese and an Indian.

The Alliance Party owed its victory at the 1955 elections primarily to the vast funds put at its disposal by the Chinese bourgeoisie to finance the election campaign, and also to the good organisation of the UMNO, particularly at grass roots. Of the approximately 1,250,000 people who had the right of vote, more than 80 per cent were Malays.

One of the principal objectives of the new cabinet, headed by Abdul Rahman, was the speediest achievement of independence. But since the British refused to grant independence before internal political issues had been settled in the Federation, Abdul Rahman accepted the proposal of the Communist Party of Malaya to hold talks. At the close of December 1955, in Baling in the north of Malaya negotiations took place between the Chief Ministers of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore and the Malaysian Chinese Association, on the one side, and representatives of the Communist Party of Malaya and the Command of the National Liberation Army, on the other. During the negotiations the government delegation, however, demanded unconditional capitulation and advanced a number of other conditions unacceptable for the Communist Party. As a result no agreement was reached and the Communist Party announced its determination to continue the struggle.

Though Abdul Rahman's cabinet failed to get the Communist Party to capitulate, and though, in the course of the negotiations, representatives of the governments of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore demonstrated their implacable hos-

tility towards the Communists, their meeting with the leaders of the Communist Party and representatives of the Command of the National Liberation Army gave this cabinet certain political trumps.

The British authorities, realising that their arbitrary rule was about to end anyway, agreed to grant independence to the Federation of Malaya. On August 31, 1957, the Federation of Malaya was proclaimed an independent state within the framework of the British Commonwealth, with Britain remaining in command of military operations against the guerillas. Abdul Rahman's cabinet took charge of finance, internal security and defence. A Constitution was adopted formulated according to the recommendations of a special commission, consisting of two representatives from Britain (one of them was the chairman), and one each from Australia, India and Pakistan. The Alliance Party introduced certain amendments into the article dealing with the special rights of the Malays, such as their rights to land, and to hold certain administrative posts, the granting of stipends to students and so forth. Islam was proclaimed the official religion, but at the same time freedom of religious worship was declared.

Malay became the official language, with English as the second official language for the first ten years. The Constitution envisaged that after 1967 Malay would become the only official language, unless parliament decide to continue to keep English as a second official language.

In exchange for concessions from the Malaysian Chinese Association, the UMNO and the sultans agreed to extend the automatic right to citizenship to non-Malays to a certain extent. The Constitution recognised the right of citizenship to

all people born in the country after August 31, 1957.*

Further, citizenship rights were granted to any person whose father was a citizen of the Federation at the time of his birth. The procedure of acquiring citizenship on application was slightly modified. In particular a provision was introduced under which non-Malays applying for citizenship were obliged to acquire a definite knowledge of the Malay language within a year. These concessions were made for the purpose of enlarging the participation of the non-Malays in the elections and to bolster the influence of the Chinese and Indian population in the country's public life to some extent.

In the early fifties the working class and trade union movement began to regain momentum. The Labour Party of Malaya, expressing the interests of the Chinese and Indian working people, was formed in June 1952, and three years later, in 1955, the People's Party, orientated on the Malayan peasants, was established. That year the Malaysian Trade Union Congress embraced 145,000 people or 80 per cent of the organised workers and employees, compared with 54,000 in 1950. In 1956, the number of strikes rose to 213 involving 48,700 people and entailing the loss of 562,000 man-days.

On August 31, 1957, the day the Federation of Malaya was granted independence, the Labour Party and the People's Party united to form the coalition Socialist Front Party, which set itself

* In 1962, this article was amended, giving citizenship rights to those who were born in the Federation and at least one of whose parents had been a resident in the country at the time of their birth.

the task of working for the country's economic independence, the establishment of democratic rights for the working people and for raising their standard of living.

The proclamation of the Federation of Malaya an independent state was a major breakthrough in the struggle of its multinational population against colonialism. It opened up prospects to the people of further strengthening their political independence and of a gradual achievement of economic independence. At the same time the significance of this event was narrowed by the conclusion in 1957 of a treaty on defence and mutual assistance between the Federation of Malaya and Britain under which Britain obtained the right to keep her armed forces and maintain naval, air and land bases on the Malay territory. The Federation remained economically dependent on Britain as a result of the influence of British monopoly capital in rubber production, tin mining and other key branches of the economy, and in banking and foreign trade. On top of that Britain demanded that the Federation's foreign currency be deposited with London banks, and also obtained guarantees from the Federal Government that the property of British companies would not be nationalised.

The statutory parliamentary elections, held in the spring of 1959, disclosed the deep discontent of wide sections of the population with the policy of the ruling circles. The opposition parties, primarily the coalition Socialist Front Party, which relied mainly on the working sections of the urban Chinese and Indian population and plantation workers, made considerable headway. The Socialist Front polled 581,000 votes, compared with 794,000 votes won by the ruling Alliance Party.

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Taking into account the election returns the Alliance Party modified its internal policy and took measures to expand its social base in the rural areas.

The year 1959 brought success to the national liberation movement in the neighbouring colony of Singapore. The elections held that year put in power the People's Action Party which had the support of the island's trade unions. The Alliance Party could not overlook this development in working out its domestic policy. At the same time the growth of the national liberation movement in Singapore and the increased demands for independence for the North Kalimantan territories could not but worry the Federation's ruling circles and the British imperialists. And they came to the conclusion that the best way out of the situation was to unite the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak into a single federal state of Malaysia.

The methods and principles along which it was proposed to establish Malaysia encountered bitter opposition from the Socialist Front, the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party, the People's Progressive Party (founded in 1956 and very influential in Perak), the United Democratic Party (established in 1962 by the former members of the Malaysian Chinese Association who left it) and other organisations. Nevertheless, Malaysia came into being on September 16, 1963, and is now known as the Federation of Malaysia.

The establishment of the Federation of Malaysia led to the rupture of diplomatic and trade relations between Malaysia and its closest neighbours, Indonesia and the Philippines. The Indo-

nesia Government announced that it would conduct a policy of confrontation with Malaysia.

The tense domestic and international situation in which Malaysia was formed was exploited by its ruling circles to spread nationalistic sentiments among wide sections of the population. The Socialist Front, which opposed the establishment of Malaysia and criticised other aspects of the official domestic and foreign policy, was subjected to constant reprisals with the result that its influence declined sharply. This was reflected in the April 1964 parliamentary elections, when the ruling Alliance Party and particularly the Malaysian Chinese Association, which is part of it, increased their representation in the Lower House from 13 to 27. The growth of the Malaysian Chinese Association's influence was mainly due to the weakening of the Socialist Front, which only held two seats. The electoral defeat and the sectarian Leftist blunders committed by the leadership of the Socialist Front, and especially by some of the Labour Party leaders, led to the collapse of this coalition at the end of 1965 and the beginning of 1966.

The formation of Malaysia engendered fresh contradictions within the Federation, mainly between the Malaysian Chinese Association, representing the interests of the wealthy Chinese bourgeoisie, and the People's Action Party of Singapore, representing in a great measure the interests not only of the wealthy, but also part of the island's petty bourgeoisie. The complex of disagreements was very involved and included political, economic and national issues. In the summer of 1965, these contradictions became particularly intense, and in August of that year Singapore took a decision to withdraw from Malaysia. On

August 9, Singapore was proclaimed an independent state.

Following Singapore's withdrawal from the Federation, Malaysian ruling circles concentrated on strengthening the country's international position and expanding its economic ties with other countries. In 1966, Indonesia abandoned its policy of confrontation and the two countries normalised their diplomatic relations.

Observing the steadily growing international influence and prestige of the socialist countries, the Malaysian Government deemed it necessary to establish contacts with them, particularly with the Soviet Union.

The first steps in this direction were taken in 1966, and in April 1967, a Soviet-Malaysian trade agreement was signed in Kuala Lumpur. At the same time both countries agreed, in principle, to establish diplomatic relations. The official announcement of the establishment of Soviet-Malaysian diplomatic relations was made in November 1967. In May the following year, the then Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia (now Head of Government) Tun Abdul Razak paid an official visit to Moscow. In March 1969, a Soviet trade delegation headed by the Minister of Foreign Trade N. S. Patolichev visited Malaysia. In a joint communique, issued at the end of this visit, both countries stressed their desire to strengthen and develop their relations. The first Soviet-Malaysian trade and industrial exhibition, which was organised in Kuala Lumpur in September 1969, did much to promote trade between the two countries, particularly to extend the export of certain types of Soviet industrial items to Malaysia.

The years that have passed since Malaysia became independent are a sufficiently long period to assess some results of its economic development. There has been an increase in economic growth rates. For example, the average annual increment in the gross national product in the period from 1961 to 1966 was 5.9 per cent, or 3 per cent in terms of per head of population.

The most important changes were registered in agriculture. Rubber production rose to more than 1,000,000 tons in 1968, 45 per cent of total world output. The output of rice also increased. In 1966, local rice production covered 74 per cent of the population's needs in West Malaysia. With the irrigation construction now in progress it is planned by the mid-seventies to make the country self-sufficient in rice. The growth rates of the manufacturing industry were not rapid enough and in 1970 it still accounted for only 12 per cent of the value of West Malaysia's gross national product. During these years the road network has been expanded to some extent and so have the water supply system and the output of electricity.

There has been marked progress in the development of public education. The system of state-run secondary schools expanded at a particularly rapid pace. In 1970, there were about 1,400,000 schoolchildren in the primary schools and 479,000 were attending secondary schools in West Malaysia.

Despite these socio-economic changes, Malaysia is still facing a number of urgent economic and social problems. So far it has been unable to change its status as a source of farm produce and raw materials, or to substantially reduce its extremely great dependence on the world market, or solve the problem of unemployment.

Above all else the socio-economic policy of the ruling circles is designed to defend the interests of both local private capital, with its ever strengthening positions, and foreign capital. The privileges made available to foreign capital stimulate its influx into the country, which makes it all the more difficult for Malaysia to achieve economic independence. The loans granted by international banks, principally by banks dependent on the United States, which help Malaysia finance its economic development, do not further the country's liberation from foreign dependence either.

The measures introduced in agriculture do not strike at the root of feudal land tenure, which took shape in the colonial period, and consequently do not free the poorest sections of the peasants from a semi-feudal exploitation by big landed proprietors, merchants and moneylenders. As regards the Government's efforts to develop new lands and build settlements on them, they involve only an insignificant section of the population and consequently cannot solve the problem of land hunger, or of the latent agrarian overpopulation.

While in the first years of its independent development Malaysia received high prices for its raw material exports, in the following years they became subject to considerable fluctuations which slowed down economic growth rates. In the period from 1965 to 1968, the average annual growth rate of West Malaysia's gross product was 5 per cent.

A backward step has been taken in education. The introduction of fees for secondary education since 1966, which had been free in the first years of West Malaysia's independence, has put secondary schools almost beyond the reach of children from low income families.

The nationality problem is still outstanding and it is one of the most acute problems in the country. All this arouses opposition sentiments, reflected in the democratic movement that has been on the upgrade since the mid-sixties. A feature of the present-day people's struggle for their vital rights is that it is now developing on a broader basis than in the past, in conditions when part of the country's progressive forces is gradually ridding itself of the Peking influence, which it has experienced since the beginning of the sixties. The decline of the pro-Peking orientation in Malaysia's democratic forces has resulted in the isolation of the once militant Communist Party of Malaya, whose leadership did not assess correctly the important political changes that had taken place in the country following the proclamation of independence and failed to adjust its activities to the new conditions. At present the Party leadership is in Peking from where it is trying to impose the pro-Peking adventuristic course on democratic elements in Malaysia. The split in the Socialist Front (which took place at the close of 1965-beginning of 1966)—part of the leadership of one of its parties, the Labour Party, was profoundly influenced by the Communist Party of China—is also an indication that the democratic movement in Malaysia is rectifying its Leftist blunders and extending its social base. After quitting the Labour Party, owing to differences of opinion with its present leadership, such prominent functionaries as Tyn Chee Khoon, and V. David, General Secretary of the Transport Workers Union, jointly with the leaders of the Malaysian Trade Unions Congress and other democratic organisations started to form in 1968 a new party—the Malaysian Peoples Movement Party (Partai Gerakan

Rakjat Malaysia). This Party plans to work not only among the urban, primarily Chinese and Indian population, but also among the Malayan peasants.

In August 1968, former members of the People's Party which is vying with the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party for influence over the Malayan peasants in the northeastern regions of the country, founded the Malaysian Proletarian Party (Partai Marhaen Malaysia).

The consistent struggle of progressive forces in Malaysia for the establishment of a broad opposition to the ruling coalition resulted in a major success of the progressive forces of West Malaysia in the parliamentary elections, held on May 10, 1969. The Alliance Party lost 13 seats in the Lower House and got only 76 compared with 89 it had before, the Malaysian Chinese Association sustaining a particularly heavy defeat.

At the expense of the seats lost by the Alliance Party and particularly by the Malaysian Chinese Association, the opposition parties nearly doubled their numbers in the Lower House (from 19 to 37). At the same time, while the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party, which is built along national lines, increased its seats from 9 to 12, such opposition parties as the Democratic Action Party, the Malaysian People's Movement and the People's Progressive Party won 13, 8 and 4 seats respectively.

The election results, however, were cancelled owing to the outbreak on May 13, 1969, three days after the elections, of the biggest clashes between Malays and Chinese ever seen in the country. On that day a state of emergency was proclaimed and neither the new parliament nor the legislative assemblies of the states were formed. The functions of a legislative organ were trans-

ferred to the National Operations Council headed by Tun Abdul Razak. Other Council members included Chief of the General Staff of the Malaysian Armed Forces and Inspector General of Police.

Among the first steps taken by the National Operations Council was the imposition of censorship on newspapers and almost all postal and telegraph services. A law promulgated in October 1969, banned the leaders of political parties from holding official trade union posts. This law has been designed to prevent the involvement of trade unions in the domestic political struggle and their leaders have had to stop taking part in the leadership of the Malaysian People's Movement.

The recent developments in Malaysia dealt a heavy blow to the trade union and democratic movement. Winning a majority of votes in the parliamentary elections in Sabah and Sarawak in the summer of 1970, the United Malay National Organisation increased its influence in the country.

At the same time the May 1969 events caused a change in the balance of political forces in this organisation: Abdul Rahman relinquished his post of party president and Abdul Razak, one of his vice-presidents, was elected in his place. In September 1970, Abdul Razak became Prime Minister of Malaysia.

In February 1971, the state of emergency was lifted and parliament, in which the ruling party has the absolute majority, resumed its sessions. This majority enabled the ruling party to pass through parliament constitutional amendments prohibiting parliamentary discussions of the national question, the question of the special rights of the Malays and other crucial issues. The National Operations Council is continuing its activ-

ity and has issued a decision prohibiting students to take part in the political struggle.

In the sphere of foreign policy the new Government put forward a proposal to make Southeast Asia neutral. At the same time it announced that it would continue military co-operation with Britain. The forms of this co-operation were defined in the course of talks between Malaysia, the UK, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand in the first half of 1971.

SINGAPORE

The Republic of Singapore, the youngest independent state in Southeast Asia, lies 129 kilometres north of the equator, off the southernmost extremity of the Malay Peninsula, to which it is joined by a 1,500-metre long causeway carrying a road and railway. It consists of Singapore Island, which is separated from the Peninsula by the narrow Johore Strait, and 40 islets.

Singapore has an area of only 581 square kilometres and a population of 2,047,505 (est. 1970) of whom 76.2 per cent are of Chinese descent, 15 per cent are Malays and nearly 7 per cent are Indians, Pakistanis and Ceylonese. The capital is the city of Singapore.

Before the Second World War Singapore was part of the British colonial possessions on the Malay Peninsula known as British Malaya. Administratively Singapore with Penang and Malacca were combined into an independent unit called the Straits Settlements.

Besides being one of the world's largest ports and a major re-export trade centre in Southeast Asia, Singapore, which the British had in the mid-thirties turned into one of their biggest naval and air bases in the Far East, was also of considerable strategic importance.

Historically, Singapore was the centre of the revolutionary movement of the whole of Malaya, primarily as a result of the class structure of its population. The main classes of the Singapore society are the bourgeoisie, the proletariat and various urban strata: petty traders, artisans and the intelligentsia.

A feature of the national liberation movement in Singapore was that it developed under the strong influence of the national liberation movement in India and particularly in China, and reflected both their weak and strong sides. Subsequently, it came under the influence of the Indonesian national democratic revolution.

The first bourgeois-democratic organisations appeared in Singapore at the turn of the century, under the impact of the growth of this movement in China. After the defeat of the Chinese revolutionaries in 1905-1908, Singapore became a centre of activity of Chinese political refugees. The great Chinese revolutionary democrat Sun Yat-sen lived and worked there early in the first decade of this century. In these and following years a branch of the Chinese revolutionary party Tung Men Hui, headed by Sun Yat-sen, functioned in Singapore. In 1915, there was an uprising of Indian units quartered in Singapore, which reflected the revolutionary struggle of the Indian people.

The victory of the October Socialist Revolution invigorated the national liberation movement of the working masses in Singapore. The formation in April 1930, of the illegal Communist Party of Malaya which operated both in Singapore and on the Peninsula tremendously stimulated the national liberation movement. Working in difficult underground conditions and brutally persecuted by the colonial authorities, the

Communist Party gradually organised the working class. In 1935, it established the General Council of Trade Unions, which staged a number of major strikes on the Malay Peninsula and in Singapore in the pre-war years.

In the early post-war years the Communist Party of Malaya was allowed to function legally. The General Council of Trade Unions, which was reorganised in February 1946, into the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, resumed its activities. At the same time a number of progressive parties were formed in Singapore. Like the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions they became active throughout the colony. The Malay National Party and the Democratic Alliance which co-operated with the Communist Party were two of these.

Frightened by the growing scope of the national liberation movement in Singapore and the Malay Peninsula during the post-war years, the British imperialists decided to cut short the process by turning Singapore into a separate colony independent of Malaya. This was done in March 1946.

The imperialists' political manoeuvre was basically at variance with the island's economic interests, for historically Singapore had developed as a regional re-export centre servicing primarily nearby territories—Indonesia and particularly the Malay Peninsula. Politically, Singapore's separation split the national liberation movement in both parts of British Malaya. Instead of the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, two trade union centres were established: the Malaya Federation of Trade Unions which was active on the Malay Peninsula and the Singapore Federation of Trade Unions. But, in an effort to put down the national liberation movement of the

working masses in Singapore, the colonialists in 1947 banned the Singapore Federation of Trade Unions.

At the same time the British imperialists made certain concessions to the reformist-minded representatives of the intelligentsia, by agreeing to introduce some changes into the procedure of composing Singapore's Legislative and the Executive Councils. It was provided that persons holding no official posts should be in the majority in the Legislative Council (13 out of 21). Four would be nominated by the British Governor, three would be elected by chambers of commerce, and six others would be elected by direct vote by the population of Singapore who had the right to vote. Held early in 1948, the first elections were characterised by extreme passivity on the part of the Singapore citizens. The elected deputies co-operated with the colonial authorities. The Executive Council of Singapore consisted of seven officials and four persons holding no official posts nominated by the authorities.

In June 1948, a state of emergency was proclaimed in Singapore and in the Federation of Malaya, a British protectorate on the Malay Peninsula. The Communist Party was outlawed and there were mass arrests of Communists and other democratic functionaries on the island. In the following two or three years the island's revolutionary movement declined as a result of the repressive measures against the representatives of the more progressive sections of the Singapore population.

That year two new political parties—the Progressive Party and the Labour Party appeared in Singapore. The first was headed by representatives of the reformist sections of the Singapore intelligentsia, descendants from the old Singa-

pore families and considerably under British influence. The Party campaigned for the gradual introduction of self-government in Singapore. Standing at the head of the Labour Party were people led by a prominent Singapore lawyer, David Marshall, who represented those sections of the local intelligentsia who had greater Left-wing sentiments. The Labour Party's programme coincided to some extent with that of the British Labour Party. Like the Progressive Party, it demanded self-government for Singapore and its union with the Federation of Malaya.

The Labour Party came into contact with the Singapore Congress of Trade Unions which was formed in 1950 and enjoyed its support. Organisationally the Party was weak and did not have the backing of broad sections of the population. Chinese secondary school students, who were at that time unsparingly victimised by the British authorities, and the not numerous but politically active petty traders in the rural regions were strongly opposed to its policy.

In 1950, the British increased the number of elected members of the Legislative Council of Singapore from six to nine. The composition of the Executive Council was enlarged from 11 to 13 members by co-opting two non-official members of the Legislative Council. The lack of interest on the part of the population was just as great in the 1951 elections as in 1948. Of the 250,000 citizens of Singapore with voting rights only 50,000 registered, and only 50 per cent of these actually went to the polls. The reformist Progressive Party won six out of the nine seats, two went to David Marshall's Labour Party and one to an independent candidate.

In 1953, the colonial authorities appointed a

committee to investigate the causes of the population's lack of interest in the elections and to work out recommendations concerning the colony's state structure. A report was published in 1954 recommending the reorganisation of the Legislative Council of Singapore into a Legislative Assembly by enlarging its composition to 32 members, 25 to be elected members. The report also recommended replacing the Executive Council with a Council of Ministers to include the Governor, three officials responsible to the Governor for foreign policy, finance, defence and internal security, the Chief Minister—the leader of the party who won the majority in the Legislative Assembly—and five ministers, nominated by the Governor from among the deputies of the Legislative Assembly.

Elections to the Legislative Assembly were held in April 1955. Among the Right-wing parties who put up candidates were the Progressive Party, backed by the wealthy sections of the Chinese bourgeoisie, the newly-formed Democratic Party, which called for the recognition of Chinese as one of the official languages of the Legislative Assembly, and the Alliance Party, which was a coalition of the branches of two parties operating on the Malay Peninsula: the United Malay National Organisation and the Malaysian Chinese Association. The influence of the Alliance Party was much smaller in Singapore than on the Peninsula.

Left-wing parties were represented by the Singapore Labour Front, headed by David Marshall (formed to replace the split Labour Party), and by the People's Action Party which was formed in November 1954, and included representatives of the broadest sections of the

island's population, ranging from progressive Singapore intellectuals, who had been educated in Britain, to the proletariat and many representatives of the petty bourgeoisie. The Party relied mainly on Chinese secondary school students and on the trade unions operating independently of the Singapore Trade Union Congress. Proclaiming the formation of an "independent, democratic socialist non-communist society" as its slogan the People's Action Party succeeded in uniting the broadest strata of the Singapore population, beginning with extreme Left-wingers and ending with the moderates, and established a ramified network of party organisations. There was strict party discipline under which the lower links had to obey the rulings of the Central Committee. A Singapore lawyer, Cambridge graduate Lee Kuan Yew, became the Party's head.

In the April 1955 elections the Labour Front won 10 of the 25 seats in the Legislative Assembly. But, having failed to win an absolute majority, it was forced to form a coalition cabinet, which it did in May 1955. It formed a coalition with the Right-wing Alliance Party in preference to the more Leftist People's Action Party.

The People's Action Party immediately launched a vigorous struggle against the newly-formed Government, headed by David Marshall. Taking advantage of the "Internal Security Law" adopted in October 1955, under which the Government could imprison any person without trial for up to two years, the colonialists, at the close of the year, arrested many of the most revolutionary-minded leaders of the anti-colonial movement,

In an effort to blunt the revolutionary movement in Singapore, the Marshall Government got the Legislative Assembly to adopt a resolution calling for a new state system and immediate self-government for the island. Talks on granting the island self-government were held in London in April 1956, between the Governments of Singapore and the United Kingdom. But by then the Marshall Government had already been weakened both by the revolutionary manifestations on the island at the close of 1955, and by the defection of two deputies from the Labour Front to opposition parties.

The London talks collapsed because Marshall's delegation refused to have Britain retain control over internal security issues to the extent that Whitehall demanded. As a result the Marshall Government had to resign and the office of Chief Minister was taken over by a representative of the same party, the leader of the Singapore Congress of Trade Unions, Lim Yew Hock.

Going to all lengths to win the trust of the British colonial authorities and thus persuade them to grant self-government to the island with the least possible delay, Lim Yew Hock took a harder line towards the participants in the national liberation movement. He dissolved a number of the more revolutionary-minded organisations, including the Union of Students of Chinese Secondary Schools, and ordered the arrest of many people who took part in the revolutionary movement. These measures had the reverse effect. A series of demonstrations and protest strikes, involving young people and some trade unions, took place on the island in September 1956, which were put down by the colo-

nialists with troops transferred from the Federation of Malaya.

Highly impressed by the Lim Yew Hock Government's determination to crush the revolutionary movement, the colonialists agreed to hold further talks on self-government for the island. During the talks which were held in March and April 1957, it was decided that Singapore would be granted self-government in 1959. It was agreed that the post of Head of State (Yang di-Pertuan Agong) would be instituted with the Legislative Assembly consisting of 51 elected members. The British were to retain control over internal political activities through the Internal Security Council consisting of three UK representatives (one of whom would be the chairman), three representatives from Singapore and one from the Federation of Malaya, the latter to have a casting vote in the event of disagreements between Singapore and Britain. Britain was to retain control over foreign policy and defence and also retained the right to suspend the new constitution at will. At the same time the British Government demanded that no person who had previously been persecuted for political activity would be nominated for the elections to the Legislative Assembly.

Regarding the People's Action Party as its principal political opponent, the Lim Yew Hock's Government arrested that Party's Left-wing leaders in August 1957. They were in the majority in the Party's Central Committee, and these arrests enabled the leaders of the moderate wing to regain their positions in the Party. At the end of the same year the Party won the majority of seats in the elections to the Singapore Municipal Council. It also scored a major victory in the

elections to the Legislative Assembly in May 1959, by gaining 43 out of the 51 seats. The General Secretary Lee Kuan Yew was asked to form the Government of the "autonomous and self-governing" Singapore state.

Prior to commencing the formation of the Government Lee Kuan Yew had demanded that Britain should release the arrested Left-wing leaders of the People's Action Party. This was done and Lee Kuan Yew formed a cabinet and became Prime Minister of Singapore. But not a single responsible post in this Government was given to any leading Left-wing functionary in the Party.

From the very outset the new Government had to cope with serious economic difficulties, the main problem being the fall in the volume of re-export trade—the foundation of Singapore's economy, the removal of the capital and the offices of private enterprises to the neighbouring Federation of Malaya, mounting unemployment due to the rapid growth of population (over 3 per cent a year) and an acute housing shortage.

In an effort to overcome these difficulties the Government decided to draw private local and foreign capital into financing the development of a manufacturing industry. An Economic Development Board was established on the island. One of its tasks was to stimulate the creation of new branches of industry, essential for Singapore's national development, with the help of licences and other measures. These enterprises were exempt from taxation for the first few years after going into operation. To solve the housing crisis the Government launched a programme of inexpensive housing construction.

But there was disagreement within the People's

Action Party concerning the Government economic policy, which came under fire from the Party's Left wing. The leaders of this group opposed the considerable privileges which the Government granted to private capital, both local and foreign. Discontented with the Government policy, they vigorously supported the strike movement that was steadily gaining momentum on the island.

Early in 1960, the Government, hoping to weaken the strike movement and win trade union support, passed a number of labour laws designed to meet the interests of the trade union membership. As a result a part of the influential Left-wing trade union functionaries decided to give their general support to the Government's political and economic policies.

The increased inflow of private local and foreign capital which the Government channeled into key economic branches, and the introduction of measures in the immediate interests of the working population slightly improved the economic situation in the country and to some extent raised the standard of living.

The particular difficulties of Singapore's economic development arise from the fact that the island does not have its own raw materials base. Its industry depends entirely on imported raw materials. Moreover, owing to its small population, the island has a very limited domestic market which restricts industrial development. In view of this it was only natural that the Singapore Government should be very anxious to form a common market on the basis of a union with the Federation of Malaya.

For a long time the Malay Government was against forming a union with Singapore, fear-

ing that this would strengthen the revolutionary movement in the Federation of Malaya. Moreover, there was another obstacle—the national question: in the Federation of Malaya the majority of the population are Malays, while in Singapore 75 per cent of the population are Chinese. In the Federation, the Malays have certain political privileges which are guaranteed by the composition of the electorate, consisting primarily of Malayan peasants. In the event of Singapore joining the Federation, its population would also vote and this would alter the national composition of the electorate and weaken the position of the leaders of the Malay community in upholding the privileges of the Malayan population.

Nevertheless, by the beginning of 1961, largely as a result of the growing influence of Left-wing forces in Singapore in the period after 1959, there were already prospects for a union between the Federation of Malaya and Singapore. The mounting national liberation movement in Singapore gained particular importance in the light of the coming Anglo-Singapore talks on the status of the island, which were scheduled for June 1963. It was not improbable that the coming elections to the Singapore Legislative Assembly would put a government with stronger Left-wing views than those of the Lee Kuan Yew Government.

In view of this the Malay ruling circles got the idea of establishing a "Greater Malaysia" including not only Singapore with its predominantly Chinese population but also the British colonies in Northern Kalimantan — Sabah (Northern Borneo), Sarawak and Brunei—where Malays made up the majority of the population. The Chinese would thus remain a minority of the population of Federation of Malaysia.

Malaysia was to be put together in this way to enable the ruling circles of the Federation of Malaya to extend their control both to Singapore and the territories in Northern Kalimantan, and inhibit the development of the national liberation movement, particularly, in Singapore.

For over two years Britain, the Federation of Malaya and Singapore discussed terms for the formation of Malaysia. For the sake of forming a union, the Singapore Government agreed to a number of major concessions, in the matter of Singapore's representation in the Malaysian parliament, citizenship rights and other issues, and in return managed to retain autonomy in labour relations, education, and in health and public services.

The Left wing of the People's Action Party vigorously opposed the formation of Malaysia on the terms advanced by the Governments of Singapore and the Federation of Malaya. On July 20, 1961, twelve deputies from the People's Action Party, most of whom were leaders of the Singapore Trade Union Congress, abstained from a vote of confidence to the Government in the Legislative Assembly. As a result nine of them were expelled from the Party. On July 25, 1961, the Singapore Trade Union Congress was dissolved.

In August the same year the deputies expelled from the People's Action Party formed an opposition party, the Socialist Front and an associated trade union centre, the 160,000 strong Singapore Association of Trade Unions. Another group of trade unions, the National Trade Union Congress, with 110,000 members, was established with the support of the People's Action Party.

Backed by the Singapore Association of Trade

Unions, the Socialist Front settled down to a resolute struggle against the formation of the Federation of Malaysia and in 1962, the Council of Joint Action—an alliance of six opposition political parties, was set up on the initiative of the Socialist Front.

On September 1, 1962, the proposed terms of Singapore's union with the Federation of Malaya were put to a popular vote. The majority (398,000 people out of 562,000) approved the terms put forward by the island's Government. This exacerbated the disagreements between the opposition parties and some of them announced their withdrawal from the Council of Joint Action.

The anti-British uprising, which flared up in Brunei at the end of 1962, largely influenced the decision of this sultanate not to join the proposed federation.

Repressions against the opposition forces in Singapore increased following the Brunei uprising. On February 2, 1963, on the decision of the Internal Security Council more than a hundred members of the Socialist Front and the Singapore Association of Trade Unions were arrested. As August 31, 1963, the day when Malaysia was to be established, drew closer the Singapore authorities tightened restrictions on the activities of the Singapore Association of Trade Unions. A month before the proclamation of Malaysia the authorities froze the bank accounts of three of the country's leading trade unions—the Association of Unskilled Workers, the Union of Bus Drivers and the Union of Trade Workers.

The Federation of Malaysia was proclaimed on September 16, 1963, a few days later than planned. Persecution of organisations with anti-

Malaysian sentiments continued. At the beginning of October 1963, a ban was imposed on two associations of rural inhabitants in Singapore and on three organisations of rural traders. An attempt was made to reorganise the administration of Nanyang University where instruction is in the Chinese language. In reply, the students who supported the Socialist Front held a political strike involving 500 people early in October.

After that the Singapore Government announced its intention to annul the registration of seven largest branches of the Singapore Association of Trade Unions. The Association reacted by organising a general strike on October 8, 1963. Begun by the bus workers, builders and the employees of commercial companies, the strike was supported by many workers, who were members of various trade unions. It lasted for two days, October 8 and 9 involving 100,000 people. A section of the Association's trade unions did not join the strike and announced their withdrawal from the Association. In November 1963, the Singapore authorities refused to register the Association. Although it had never been registered before it had been de facto recognised by the authorities. The leading role in the island's trade union movement was taken over by the National Trade Union Congress which was officially registered in January 1964.

Singapore remained part of the Federation of Malaysia for about two years. The efforts of the leadership of the People's Action Party to uphold Singapore's national interests brought it into collision with the Malaysian Chinese Association, a party of the wealthy Chinese bourgeoisie in Malaysia, and also with the policy of the ultra-nationalistic elements in the United Malay

National Organisation. In the summer of 1965, the contradictions between the ruling circles of the Federation of Malaysia and Singapore reached such a pitch that Singapore decided to withdraw from the Federation. On August 9, 1965, Singapore was proclaimed an independent state.

Now it was of the utmost importance that Singapore's independence should receive international recognition without delay. This was not a simple matter, since the naval and air base which Britain still maintained on the island was a major link in Singapore's economy. Fully aware that a great deal depended on support from the young sovereign states of Asia and Africa, the Singapore Government on August 9, 1965, informed the governments of the United Arab Republic, India, Burma, Cambodia and also the countries of the British Commonwealth of the change in the island's political status. Within the next few days Singapore was recognised by Malaysia, Britain, New Zealand, Australia, Cambodia, the United States, India and Japan and soon afterwards by a number of other states. On September 22, 1965, Singapore became a member of the United Nations.

On the domestic political scene the principal acts of the Singapore Government during this period were the proclamation of the republic on December 22, 1965, and the abolition of all titles of nobility.

Refusing to recognise Singapore's independence, which it characterised as "fictitious", the Socialist Front decided to boycott the parliament. As a result the party gradually lost a large number of members, broke away from the masses and deteriorated into an ultra-Left sectarian group.

At present there is no organised opposition in the Singapore parliament. The National Trade Union Congress announced its full support for the Government's home and foreign policies. Taking advantage of this the Government in August 1968, forced the Trade Union Congress to accept a number of rules on labour issues restricting the activity of the trade unions to some extent, and increasing the rights of the employers. Strikes in key industries were outlawed.

The vital economic problems facing Singapore are in the main the same as those it faced before joining Malaysia: lack of capital to finance industrialisation, a high degree of dependence on foreign trade, and the problem of employment, which is more acute than in any other Southeast Asian country.

The continuing need to find new consumer markets for the island's manufacturing industry has induced the Government to establish friendly relations with as many countries as possible and refrain from joining the military blocs set up by the imperialist states. Regarding the countries of the socialist community as reliable trading partners, Singapore established trade relations with the Soviet Union in March 1966, and then with other socialist states. Since then Soviet-Singapore economic co-operation has been expanding steadily. The establishment of trade relations, and, in June 1968, of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Singapore marked a new stage in the development of Singapore's foreign policy, manifesting its ability to cope with foreign political issues independently.

Unemployment is still one of the most acute economic problems on the island. Official figures put the number of unemployed at 70,000 or 10

per cent of the employed. The actual number of unemployed is much greater.

Yet despite serious economic difficulties this young state has to overcome its economic development has been fairly successful since 1965, the year it was granted self-government. The average annual growth of the gross national product in the years 1965 to 1968 surpassed 9 per cent, with industrial output increasing at a higher rate. In 1967, it was 18 per cent up on 1966, and in 1968 21 per cent.

A key industrial centre, Jurong, was built with Government assistance. Another industrial centre—Kranji—is at present under construction. Singapore has become a major centre for storing, refining and transporting oil products in Southeast Asia. An iron and steel factory with an annual capacity of 55,200 tons of rolled iron and steel has been built. In time its capacity will be raised to 100,000 tons a year.

Education and housing construction have made substantial progress.

All these facts demonstrate the real viability of the republic and prove that its working population, fully aware of the difficulties facing the country, is prepared to make certain sacrifices for the sake of overcoming the dire heritage of colonialism and to win economic independence.

INDONESIA

Indonesia is a republic in Southeast Asia comprising the islands of the Malay archipelago and the western part of New Guinea (West Irian). It has an area of 1,904,000 sq km and a population of 124,000,000 (est. 1971) with an annual growth of 2.3 per cent. The majority of the population (about 66 per cent or 80.2 millions) live on Java, 4,750,000 people (est. 1970) residing in Djakarta, the capital of the republic. The largest islands: Kalimantan—the Indonesian part of it is 540,000 sq km, Sumatra—473,500 sq km, West Irian—413,000 sq km, Sulawesi—189,000 sq km, and Java and Madura—132,000 sq km.

Of the 360 nationalities and ethnic groups inhabiting Indonesia the biggest are the Javanese (over 45 per cent), the Sundanese (approximately 14 per cent), the Madurese (about 7 per cent). About 3,000,000 people are of Chinese origin and approximately 50 per cent of these are citizens of the Chinese People's Republic or people without citizenship. According to official figures, 87 per cent of the population are Moslems and 4 per cent Christians, the remainder are Buddhists, Hinduists and animists. The official language is Indonesian which belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian group of languages.

Indonesia is a unitary presidential republic. Under the Constitution adopted in 1945, the supreme organ of state power is the People's Consultative Congress, elected by universal suffrage, which determines the republic's political line. Though Parliament is elected at general elections, about 20 per cent of its deputies (100 out of 460) were nominated in 1971 by the President from among the Armed Forces. Parliamentary deputies are members of the People's Consultative Assembly. The Congress appoints the president who is head of state, prime minister and supreme commander-in-chief of the armed forces for a five-year term. The parliament, the House of Representatives, is in charge of current legislation and its decisions come into force on receiving the president's approval. Up to 1971 the Congress was wholly nominated by the President and therefore was called People's Consultative Assembly. The first elections in the country's history were held in 1971.

The Indonesian people have long-standing and glorious traditions of fighting for their national independence. For 350 years Indonesia was under the colonial domination of the Netherlands. Dutch colonialists resorted to the most barbarian and predatory methods of domination: they deliberately fostered the survivals of feudal and pre-feudal relations, to facilitate the exploitation of the country which, during the colonial period, was called the Netherlands East Indies. The colonialists developed only those branches of the economy which produced goods for shipment to the Netherlands and other European countries, mainly food and raw materials, including spices, coffee, tea, sugar, tobacco, plant fibre, copra, rubber, timber and oil.

The entire colonial period was one of unceasing popular uprisings led by Diponegoro, Surapati, Hasanuddin, Singamangaradja and other heroes of the national liberation movement. Although the colonialists invariably resorted to brutal methods to put down these uprisings, they failed to slacken the desire of the Indonesian people for independence.

The military and political débâcle of the Dutch colonialists, who were unable to stand up to the Japanese militarists, and then the rout of the axis powers in the Second World War, created favourable conditions which helped the Indonesian people to win political independence and set up a national state. This was done on August 17, 1945, when the establishment of the Republic of Indonesia, a sovereign state, independent of the Netherlands, was officially proclaimed. Dr. Sukarno, a prominent leader of the national liberation movement, became the first president of the republic.

The August revolution was carried out by a united national front, under the hegemony of the national bourgeoisie which, by virtue of its weak economic and political positions, was initially compelled to let representatives of the proletariat and its political parties take a share in state administration. But the Communist Party of Indonesia, which had sustained heavy losses in the years of the underground anti-imperialist struggle against the Dutch colonialists and Japanese invaders, failed to take advantage of the situation and to make the working class the hegemon of the revolution.

Since the proclamation of independence by Indonesia was a serious blow at colonialism in Southeast Asia, it was only natural that the young

republic promptly encountered the opposition of a united front of the imperialist powers—the United States, Britain and the Netherlands—which initially used the troops of the defeated Japan to “maintain law and order” pending the arrival of the British and Dutch forces. Landing on the islands of the archipelago on September 29, 1945, the first units of the combined Anglo-Dutch forces launched bloody reprisals against the republicans. The slaughter of tens of thousands of civilians and the occupation of key regions were accompanied by the restoration of the colonial rule and the establishment of puppet states.

The republic had to wage a bitter fight to preserve its independence. The National Army of Indonesia and guerilla detachments, which were formed in the course of this struggle, struck hard at the colonialists, preventing them from consolidating their positions in the occupied regions. The international support rendered to the Indonesian people by the Soviet Union and by democratic forces in capitalist countries, including the Netherlands, proved to be an important factor. Soviet representatives in the United Nations made the most of the Organisation's rostrum to unmask the imperialist plans of suppressing Indonesia's independence.

The influence of Left-wing forces in Indonesia mounted as the anti-colonial struggle continued. At the same time delimitation became more and more obvious between them and the Right-wing groups, who were prepared to make a deal with the Dutch at the expense of Indonesia's national sovereignty, and who opposed the introduction of democratic reforms.

At a conference in August 1948, the Communist Party of Indonesia adopted the resolu-

tion "The New Road for the Republic of Indonesia" which called for the establishment of a united national democratic front. At the time the Government headed by Right-wing nationalist Mohammed Hatta viewed this resolution as a threat to the positions of Right-wing forces and decided to consolidate its positions at one blow: in September 1948, the authorities organised a provocation in Eastern Java, in the vicinity of Madiun, by arresting a number of progressive army officers. This step evoked opposition from the military units stationed in Eastern Java, and the authorities promptly accused the Communist Party of attempting to overthrow the Government and subjected its members to brutal terrorism. Musso, Amir Sharifuddin and other members of the Party Central Committee were among the hundreds of Communists massacred by the authorities. The Madiun provocation was a serious blow at the Indonesian people's anti-imperialist struggle and weakened their forces considerably.

Nevertheless, the revolutionary activity of the Indonesian people was so strong in those years, that these treacherous measures from the reactionary elements failed to put down the national liberation movement. In the course of the anti-colonial war it became clear that the Dutch would be unable to smash the republican forces and re-establish the colonial status of the former Netherlands East Indies. The Hague had no alternative but to begin negotiations, which terminated in November 1949: the Netherlands recognised the independence of Indonesia, but imposed a number of onerous financial-economic and military agreements on it. The Dutch also imposed a federal structure on the republic—the United States of Indonesia—which was another measure

designed to help them retain their positions in the country. But the federal structure was abolished soon afterwards. In August 1950, under the pressure of national democratic forces the United States of Indonesia was reorganised into a unitary Republic of Indonesia.

Despite the difficulties of the struggle which was waged in conditions of unceasing imperialist pressure from the outside and the rule in 1948-1952 of reactionary cabinets headed by Moham-med Hatta, Mohammed Natsir and Sukiman, the democratic forces managed to enhance and consolidate their influence in the late forties and early fifties. The collapse in 1952 of the Government formed by the reactionary Right-wing Moslem party Masjumi, headed by Sukiman was a turning point. Its anti-labour legislation and repression of the peasants, and attempts to sign a mutual security agreement with the United States aroused nationwide indignation. It was replaced by a Government under the leader of the National People's Party, Wilopo, the first Indonesian cabinet to have the support of the Communist Party since 1948.

In subsequent years the Indonesian democratic forces took vigorous measures to extend and consolidate their newly-won independence and abolish the unequal agreements with the Netherlands. In April 1953, the authorities closed down the Dutch military mission in Indonesia and in March 1956, they dissolved the union relations between the republic and the Netherlands, simultaneously repudiating related financial and economic commitments. Indonesia's terms for the return of West Irian, illegally held by the Netherlands after 1949, were turned down and sabotaged by the Dutch.

In the meantime the Communist Party successfully replenished its ranks and won back its influence with the masses, following the blow which reaction had dealt it in 1948. By 1952, it already had about 100,000 members and candidate members. The network of Party organisations had expanded considerably. The Fifth Congress of the Communist Party, held in 1954, adopted a programme deciding the Party's political line during the national democratic stage of the revolution. The programme developed further some propositions of the resolution "New Road for the Republic of Indonesia", envisaging an alliance of all democratic forces in a united national front. The Communist Party called for the eradication of all survivals of colonialism and feudalism in all spheres of political and economic life, for the introduction of a series of democratic reforms, for an independent foreign policy and the promotion of relations with socialist countries.

A correct assessment of the specific features of this stage of the revolution and consistent efforts to uphold the working people's vital interests, enabled the Communist Party, which on all key issues acted in a bloc with the National People's Party and the Moslem Nahdatul Ulama Party, gradually to win positions from the reactionary groupings, headed by the Masjumi Party and the Indonesian Socialist Party (Right-wing Socialists).

One of the most involved problems of national development was that of economic growth. Having inherited a colonial economic structure, the republic depended almost entirely on imported manufactured goods, transport facilities, equipment and industrial raw materials and a considerable proportion of consumer items. The

domination of foreign, chiefly Dutch and US, monopolies in the mining and manufacturing industries and in agriculture (plantations), and the weak national sector of the economy reduced Indonesia's opportunities for obtaining adequate profits from its exports to import the essential commodities. The situation was further aggravated by the slump in the world prices on rubber, copra, fibre, tea and other traditional Indonesian exports, which set in in 1952. In this period the Government introduced measures to invigorate the economy by expanding exports and cutting down imports of goods of secondary importance, particularly luxury items.

However, the establishment of control over foreign trade, a progressive step in itself, was not supported by the expansion of domestic production, which retarded the achievement of economic independence and the improvement of living standards. The conservation of the survivals of feudal relations in the countryside led to the impoverishment and dispossession of the peasants and to a fall in the output of food. In turn, this undermined the general economic situation in the country, since it became necessary to import considerable quantities of rice and other products which used up foreign currency of which the republic was already short.

The imbalance between production and consumption on Java and other islands, inherited from the colonial period, proved to be a serious economic problem. Java, with its large population, largely depends on the exports of oil, tin, rubber, nickel, copra, timber and other items produced in Sumatra, Sulawesi and Kalimantan. It was this imbalance that caused disagreements between the "outer islands" and Java, the admi-

nistrative centre, and stimulated the growth of separatist sentiments on these islands.

Alarmed by the progress of the national democratic forces at parliamentary and local elections in 1955 and 1959, the Right-wing groupings decided to go into the offensive. Following the unsuccessful Right-wing coup, led by Colonel Lubis, in Djakarta in November 1956, the reactionaries in military circles, together with the leaders of Masjumi and Socialist Parties, and encouraged by international imperialism, decided to take advantage of the differences between the central authorities and the provinces. Mutinies broke out among the troops stationed on Sumatra, Sulawesi and the Moluccas. Led by Right-wing officers and prominent Masjumi and Socialist Parties functionaries, these mutinies were accompanied by increased activities by the reactionaries in the capital.

These mutinies are frequently referred to as the separatist movement. It should be noted that the mutineers were prepared to tear the occupied territories away from the republic, but their ultimate objective was to establish an anti-communist and pro-imperialist regime throughout the country, and their demands to the central Government were formulated accordingly. The close co-operation between the leaders of the mutinies and the imperialist powers was a particularly serious threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the republic. Weapons, ammunition, equipment and other supplies were delivered to Sumatra and Sulawesi from the United States and Britain via the Philippines, Taiwan and Malaya.

The majority of the islands' population, however, did not support the separatist movement,

a factor that considerably helped the government troops, who had completed their main operations against the mutineers by the middle of 1958. The effective international support the Soviet Union and other socialist states and developing Asian and African countries rendered to Indonesia played a very important part. It should be noted that this assistance was forthcoming largely because of the independent anti-imperialist policy pursued by the Indonesian Government in the years before the outbreak of the mutinies. The Indonesian Government had been active in the preparations for, and the work of the Bandung Conference of Asian and African countries in April 1955, which proclaimed the widely-known five principles of peaceful co-existence between states (Pantja Sila). The visit of Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Kliment Voroshilov in 1957 had played a considerable part in promoting Indonesian-Soviet co-operation as had the exchange of delegations to consider state, economic and cultural relations between the two countries. In 1956, a trade agreement and the first General Agreement on economic and technical co-operation were signed between the Soviet Union and Indonesia. The Soviet Union granted Indonesia credit to the sum of \$100 million for the purchase of equipment, the construction of industrial enterprises and survey and prospecting.

The struggle which the Indonesian people conducted in the fifties for the return of West Irian was likewise regarded with understanding in the socialist and the developing countries both within the framework of the United Nations, where the question was raised for discussion every year, and outside that world body. But the

Western powers' obstructive tactics prevented the United Nations from helping Indonesia in having its legitimate demand fulfilled. In 1957, the Indonesian Government adopted a more rigid line towards the Netherlands and placed all Dutch enterprises operating in the country under state control. On December 3, 1958, the Government nationalised them. These measures were undoubtedly very important, but the overestimation of the political aspect of the matter resulted in an underestimation of the importance of the nationalised enterprises and plantations as a foundation for the establishment and development of a powerful state sector of the economy. As a result, labour productivity declined in the nationalised enterprises, and they turned into a source of enrichment for corrupt elements and thieves who, within a few years, became an influential political strata.

The mutinies in 1957 and 1958 and the anti-republican activity of the Right-wing parties, who employed both clandestine methods and tactics of parliamentary struggle against progressive forces to gain their ends, had shed new light on the deep differences between Indonesian political groups. Such was the situation when on February 21, 1957, President Sukarno advanced a programme of changes in the country's state and political structure, which soon became known as the "concept of guided democracy". Without demanding the abolition of parliament with its "opposition and obstruction" Sukarno proposed to establish a National Council under his chairmanship to "assist the Government". An important point in the concept was the formation of a "co-operation cabinet", made up of all major parties, including the Communist Party.

On the whole, Sukarno's concept was supported by Indonesian progressive forces, who saw it as a means of paralysing the influence of the reactionary, pro-imperialist circles and above all of the Masjumi and Socialist Parties, and to condemn them to isolation. In this connection the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indonesia noted that "in the interests of strengthening national unity, democracy should be expanded for the people and restricted for their enemies",* clearly indicating that it viewed the proposed changes not as a means of covering up disagreements, but as a means of resolving them, by isolating the reactionary forces.

For two years "guided democracy" was principally a concept and only some of its elements (the formation of an extra-parliamentary cabinet, for example) were translated into reality. And it was only after this period had elapsed that the President considered the time ripe for more resolute steps.

On July 14, 1959, President Sukarno dissolved the Constituent Assembly, which for three and a half years since its formation in 1955, because of Right-wing opposition, had been unable to agree on the principles of the country's political system and state structure. By the same decree he re-established the 1945 Constitution. A new Government was formed headed by President who had practically unlimited powers under the Constitution. On August 17, President Sukarno made a speech which was shortly approved as the main trend in government policy and was called the "Political Manifesto". It was a concentration of

* D. N. Aidit, *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1962, p. 601, Russ. ed.

Sukarno's teaching on "Indonesian socialism", resting on the essentially idealistic assumption of the unity of interests and aims of all sections of Indonesian society to which antagonistic class contradictions were allegedly profoundly alien. Accordingly, he reached the conclusion that the ideal system of state structure for Indonesia could be "guided democracy" as against the liberal parliamentary democracy accepted in the West. The five Pantja Sila principles—nationalism, humanism, social justice, democracy and belief in god (at that time the latter was interpreted as freedom of conscience)—were proclaimed the official ideology.

Steps taken by Sukarno signified the establishment of a new political regime in the country. The new system embodied all the elements of a regime of personal power, although, by virtue of the particular conditions obtaining in Indonesia, this power was not absolute. It was restricted, on the one hand, by the presence of the influential and steadily strengthening Communist Party, with its mass organisations, and, on the other, by the mounting role of the army, which undoubtedly played an important part in winning and defending independence and had acquired by that time the status of an influential exclusive caste with its own attitudes on the country's further development. The army regarded the Left-wing forces and above all the Communist Party as its political adversaries.

"Guided democracy" was the direct outcome of the preceding political struggle. The exacerbation of political contradictions in the fifties set the ruling circles on a search for a *modus vivendi* which presupposed the isolation of extreme Right-wing groups (in 1960 Masjumi and the Socialist

Parties were outlawed by a presidential decree) and the establishment and maintenance of the balance of forces by creating a sort of a supra-class structure. In an effort to restrict the range of possible contradictions and preclude the possibility of any side gaining the upper hand, in 1959 Sukarno made it incumbent on all political parties to follow the ideology and policy of the state authority and curtailed the powers of parliament.

There is no denying the presence of a general democratic content in the political concept put forward by Sukarno in 1957-1959, and in the Pantja Sila principles which, given the right conditions, could have become a foundation for the establishment of a national unity front. The slogan of co-operation between the three principal political trends—nationalist, religious and communist*—persistently advanced by Sukarno, contained objective prerequisites for the formation of such a front, but only if the Communist Party, having become part of it, were to be in a position to preserve its ideological and political independence. Moreover, once established, the system struck first and foremost at the reactionaries, depriving them of legal opportunities of continuing their activities. All these factors accounted for the Left-wing support for the changes in the state structure. But the Left-wing of the national liberation movement was also subjected to ideological and political restrictions and this circumstance could not but lead to contradictions some time in the future. The subsequent evolution of “guided democracy”, as was only natural, was

* In Indonesia this slogan was called NASAKOM: NAS (Nasionalis), A (Agama) and KOM (Komunis).

contingent on the class relations in the country and the class character of state authority. In this connection it is necessary to examine some of the social changes that took place unobtrusively at first in Indonesian society.

A characteristic feature on the domestic political scene in Indonesia from the end of the fifties to the beginning of the sixties was the rise of a new social stratum, the so-called bureaucratic bourgeoisie, or *cabirs* (capitalist-bureaucrats), to use the Indonesian term. This stratum embraced officials of the state and military-administrative apparatus who had grown rich by illegal machinations. The enterprises which had been nationalised during the struggle against foreign, particularly, Dutch capital, were not subject to adequate government control. There were several reasons, primarily the shortage of qualified personnel and the fact that progressive forces in Indonesia were engaged in a tense political struggle and were unable to pay sufficient attention to economic problems and the developments taking place in that sphere. Deriving great benefits from the economic difficulties, the depreciation of the rupiah, the inefficiency of the economy, including the state sector, and the ban on strikes under the martial law, these *nouveaux riches* were directly concerned with preserving tension in the country. The majority of the *cabirs* served with the land forces which, during the martial law, exercised extensive administrative and economic functions. Rapidly augmenting its political influence this social strata used it initially to preserve and extend the conditions conducive to its growth. Describing the aims and methods of the *cabirs*, General Secretary of the All-Indonesia Federation of Trade Unions (SOBSI—Sentral Orga-

nisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia), Njono wrote in 1960 that the worsening of living standards for the workers at the nationalised enterprises and the decline in their productivity of labour were "not the result of nationalisation and do not mean that nationalisation is an error. They are caused by the fact that certain cliques, which have developed into bureaucratic capitalists, are in control of these undertakings". Njono underlined that these bureaucratic capitalists were using the Law on the State of War and Emergency "for corrupt ends and self-enrichment, suppressing the workers and flirting with foreign monopoly capitalists".*

The situation in the countryside was just as complicated. In 1960, the Government promulgated the Basic Agrarian Law and the Basic Regulations on Crop Division to regulate agrarian relations and also issued a number of directives to supplement these laws. The size of a plot (irrigated and non-irrigated fields) was not to be bigger than 20 hectares and much smaller in densely populated areas. Surplus land was subject to redistribution. An attempt was made to increase the influence of the authorities on the evolution of land tenure to avert both parcelling and concentration of land. Rent was fixed at not more than 30 to 50 per cent of the harvest, whereas previously it was 70-80 per cent. The 1960 legislation was not a radical means of abolishing land hunger, particularly on Java, and only partially restricted the arbitrary rule of the landowners. Yet, limited as they were, these laws could have become a base for the further

* *World Trade Union Movement*, November, 1960, No. 11, p. 20.

struggle of national democratic forces for radical agrarian reforms, eradication of feudalism and improvement of peasants' status. Hence the vigorous support they received from the Communist Party and other Left-wing organisations in the face of bitter resistance, both overt and covert, from urban and rural exploiters.

The agrarian reform dragged on at a very slow pace. By the end of 1963 a mere nine per cent (less than 20,000 hectares) of the then revealed surplus land had been distributed among the land-hungry peasants. It should be noted in this connection that a considerable section of the landowners contrived to conceal the actual size of their estates.

In view of all this the economic situation in town and country was the weak point of the "guided democracy" throughout its existence. At first this problem was pushed into the background by the nation-wide campaign for the liberation of West Irian which moved into its decisive phase in 1960-1962. On December 19, 1961, President Sukarno issued an order indicating that the Government was prepared to use force to put an end to the drawn-out conflict. Taking this step the Indonesian Government relied on the all-round assistance of the socialist countries and the moral and political support of the majority of developing countries in Asia and Africa.

In this situation the Netherlands were forced to agree to negotiations. On August 15, 1962, as a result of round-table talks between Indonesia and the Netherlands, an agreement was signed on the procedure of transferring sovereignty over West Irian to Indonesia, to be completed by May 1, 1963.

It was a significant victory particularly because it brought political independence to the whole of Indonesia and paved the way for consolidating the gains of the revolution inside the country. This could be accomplished by broadening the democratic rights which had been curtailed under martial law, boosting the economy, primarily its state sector, and raising living standards. The strengthening links with socialist countries offered real opportunities for speeding up economic development. In the years 1960-1962, the USSR and Indonesia signed the second General Agreement on economic and technical co-operation, under which the Soviet Union granted Indonesia a credit of \$250 million, an agreement on training specialists for the Indonesian oil industry and a long-term trade agreement.

But extensive economic construction and normalisation of the situation in Indonesia was not in the interests of some influential political groups: the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which was consolidating its positions in the state apparatus, and was concerned with preserving the state of tension in the country for some time in order to expand its influence still further; the army, which feared that it would be deprived both of the political functions which, under the martial law, it performed both in the centre and in the provinces, and of its rights to the lion's share of budget allocations; and the rural exploiters for whom the agrarian reform, if carried out to the full, spelled disaster. Moreover, for all these groups an atmosphere of foreign policy conflict furnished an opportunity to curtail democratic freedoms and the activity of Left-wing forces, particularly the Communist Party of Indonesia, under the pretext of a nation-wide anti-imperialist

struggle. These factors played a paramount role in 1962 and 1963, when the Indonesian Government mapped out its further political course.

The Indonesian Government and public opinion reacted sharply to the plans of uniting former British colonies in Southeast Asia into the Federation of Malaysia to include Malaya, Singapore and three territories—Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei on Kalimantan. Viewing these plans as a means with which the British neo-colonialists intended to preserve their positions in Southeast Asia, the Indonesian leaders could not but take into account the experience of the past when the British military authorities in Malaya supported the reactionary anti-government mutinies on Sumatra and Sulawesi most generously. This alone was enough to make the Indonesian Government keep a close watch over developments along the country's borders, and from the very outset the plans for the formation of Malaysia became the central issue in the political life of Indonesia.

In January 1963, that is more than half a year before the Federation of Malaysia was formed, the Indonesian Government and military leaders announced a change to the policy of "confrontation" with regard to Malaya in the "physical, economic and political" spheres.* And in August 1963, they advanced the slogan of smashing the Federation, which was then already established.

The anti-imperialist colouring given to this campaign won it the support of political parties and mass democratic organisations. Unfortunately, the progressive forces, including the Communist Party leadership, took an incorrect view

* *Straits Times*, January 2, 1963.

of the second and most important, domestic political aspect of "confrontation". It is pointed out in the appeal issued in 1967 by the Marxist-Leninist Group of the Communist Party of Indonesia "For the Correct Road of the Indonesian Revolution", that the Party's political development in the period 1960-1965 was characterised by a departure from consistent revolutionary mass actions and the transition to positions of class co-operation with the bourgeoisie, and the loss of ideological independence. Having increased its membership considerably, the Party failed to re-educate its new members, most of whom were peasants, in the Marxist-Leninist spirit. As a result, the Party found itself ideologically and politically dissolved in the petty-bourgeois element. The appeal noted that the Party was being increasingly misled by illusions with regard to Bung Karno (Sukarno) which resulted in the loss of its political independence and led to the alignment of its theory and practices with those of Bung Karno. This, in turn, led to utter confusion in interpreting Marxism-Leninism, and to complete departure from it.*

As "guided democracy" degenerated, the Communist Party in the years 1962 and 1963 became more and more engulfed by a wave of Leftist nationalism which fatally weakened it as a party of the working class and the toiling peasantry. The ideological and political blunders of the Party leadership, of both Right-wing opportunist and Leftist nature, found their reflection particularly in the growing closeness with the Mao

* *Information Bulletin*, Peace and Socialism publishers, Prague, 1967, No. 15, Vol. 5, p. 46.

Tse-tung group and in the growing alienation from the majority of Communist and Workers' Parties. In the period 1963-1965, the leaders of the Communist Party of Indonesia increased their attacks on the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and other fraternal parties, accusing them of "modern revisionism". Exploiting its influence on the leadership of the Communist Party of Indonesia and lauding its "correct Marxist-Leninist policy" Peking spurred the leaders of the Indonesian Communists towards further Right- and Left-wing opportunist blunders.

Meanwhile Indonesia gradually moved away from its once close co-operation with socialist countries. In their efforts to plunge the country into an atmosphere of intense nationalistic passions, the Indonesian ruling circles could not fail to resort to an adventurist foreign policy, which threw them into the arms of the Mao Tse-tung group which was bent on turning Indonesia into its ally in the struggle for hegemony in the national liberation movement in Asian and African countries. While taking steps to increase and intensify disagreements between Indonesia and the socialist countries, the Peking leaders broadened their influence on Indonesian policy, pushing the country towards fresh gambles that made its domestic and international situation still more involved. In 1965, President Sukarno announced the existence of a Djakarta-Peking axis, to loud applause by the Peking leadership.

By 1964, Indonesia had fallen into an extremely difficult economic situation. Compared with 1958, prices of staple foods had risen by more than 2,000 per cent. Workers' wages and salaries were barely enough to keep their families fed for a few days in the month. Its very modest

industrial capacities were running at less than a half of their potential. The number of banknotes in circulation doubled in one year, from December 1962 to December 1963. Already in 1963, the unofficial exchange rate of the rupiah was Rp. 1,500 to \$1 compared with the official rate of Rp. 45 to \$1. Owing to the decline in production and the resulting drop in the export earnings, the Government could not repay foreign credits and loans or import essential commodities and materials.

Economic co-operation with socialist countries was coming to a standstill.

A dangerous situation was taking shape in the countryside, where the landowners, abetted by the administration, sabotaged the agrarian reform, precipitating armed clashes between the peasants and the police. The Peasants' Front of Indonesia (BTI),* operating under the supervision of the Communist Party of Indonesia, guided the peasants' struggle. But in December 1964, the Communist Party leadership gave in to pressure from the Government and certain political parties and promised to settle all matters connected with agrarian relations in a peaceful way. In effect this was a fundamental and very serious concession to exploiters in the countryside, at the expense of the toiling peasants.

The anti-Malaysian campaign, which was draining the country of its strength and resources, at times overflowing into military operations of local importance, eventually ran up a blind alley. There was mounting discontent with the deteriorating economic and political situation. Indonesia's demonstrative withdrawal from the

* Barisan Tani Indonesia.

UNO in January 1965, undertaken for the purpose of raising a fresh wave of nationalistic passions (the formal pretext for Indonesia's withdrawal was the election of the Federation of Malaysia to membership of the Security Council) only briefly diverted the attention of the population from the looming crisis.

A crisis-fraught situation in which the Communist Party and the army were the two main opposing sides arose in the country.

The curtailed ideological and class independence of the Communist Party and the blunders of its leaders seriously impaired its positions in the struggle against the mounting influence of *cabirs* in the towns and against the feudal landowners who fiercely resisted the enforcement of agrarian reforms. Having weakened the Communist Party, its enemies were not at all inclined to underestimate the potential danger, arising from the very fact of the existence of a more than 3,000,000-strong Communist Party which guided the activities of multi-million mass organisations. The large-scale celebrations marking the Party's 45 anniversary were regarded by its enemies as a demonstration of strength. In the spring and summer of 1965, the military command carried out a radical redeployment of military units and formations in Java and concentrated picked troops on the island, allegedly for the purpose of intensifying the fight against Malaysia.

Fearing that further developments might lead to a crisis of the entire political system, a group of Left-wing officers, led by Colonel Untung, battalion commander of the President's Guards Regiment, decided to undertake preventive measures and render harmless certain top-ranking

army generals, whom they regarded as the nucleus not only of the anti-communist but also of the anti-Sukarno opposition. Informed of these plans some Communist Party leaders approved them as expedient. Taking the basically correct decision—to thwart the threat emanating from Right-wing elements, the Communist Party leadership at the same time became involved in a palace conspiracy, which was to take place without the support of the masses and which was aimed at individuals. Only a small proportion of the Party Central Committee was apprised of the forthcoming action.

Launched on the night of September 30, 1965, the insurrection led by Colonel Untung was poorly prepared, both militarily and organisationally and lacked a clear-cut programme. Striking at the anti-Sukarno opposition, Untung at the same time proclaimed the dissolution of the Government and the assumption of power by the Revolutionary Council, which did not include Sukarno. This move caused confusion in the Left-wing circles. As a result, the land forces, despite the fact that the insurgents had put a number of top-ranking officers out of the way, easily put down the insurrection which came to be known as the September 30 Movement. The operation which routed the insurrection was guided by Commander of the Army Strategic Reserve Major-General Suharto.

The Communist Party bore the brunt of the repressions. Fully aware that the setbacks sustained in the past years did not reduce President Sukarno's popularity in the country, the generals, backed by reactionary Moslem organisations, launched a campaign against the Communists, under the guise of defending the President

against a possible coup d'état. Irresolute and confused, the Communist Party leadership called on the Communists to be calm, prevent bloodshed and await the political settlement promised by President Sukarno immediately after the action had taken place, but which was never translated into practice. By mid-October the country had become a scene of an extensive campaign of terrorism against the Communists. More than 300,000 Communists, including D.N. Aidit, Njoto, Lukman and other Central Committee members, were brutally assassinated. Communists and members of the mass organisations affiliated with the Communist Party were ousted from all legislative and executive bodies in the centre and in the provinces and all government institutions were purged. On March 12, 1966, the Communist Party was officially outlawed and in July the Provisional People's Consultative Congress passed a decision "banning" Marxist-Leninist ideology in the country.

In the spring of 1966, the Right-wing forces extended their offensive, now spearheaded not only against the Communists but also against the Left-wing nationalist Indonesia Party (Partai Indonesia or PARTINDO) and against the National Party, whose leaders Ali Sastroamidjojo and Surahman, were accused of maintaining close contacts with the Communists. The Party leadership was replaced and its branches were closed down in all regions. At the same time a carefully prepared campaign to depose President Sukarno was launched. While the anti-communist campaign in October 1965 was conducted under the pretext of protecting the President, in February and March 1966 the Right-wing forces had already accused Sukarno of colluding with

the Communist Party of Indonesia. They were afraid that in view of his popularity and reputation as a fighter for national independence, the President could, at some point, become a banner for the Left-wing forces. On the other hand, the failures sustained by the government policy in 1963-65, and Sukarno's irresolute stand and inability to resist consistently the attacks of the reactionaries after September 30, 1965, cost him the vital support of the masses, and his enfeebled adherents were no longer in a position to stand up in his defence against the army.

In July 1966, Sukarno was deprived of his title of life president, conferred on him in 1963. In March 1967, he was removed from the post of Head of State and Government.* General Suharto became acting president and a year later, in March 1968, the Provisional People's Consultative Congress made him President for a five-year term.

So the new regime, which came to power as a result of the Right-wing coup in 1965-66, became established. Power was taken over by the reactionary elite of the armed forces, acting in a bloc with Right-wing Moslem bourgeois parties and organisations. This anti-communist bloc reflected the interests of diverse exploiter classes and sections of the Indonesian society, particularly bourgeois groups associated with foreign capital.

In their struggle against the Left-wing forces and the supporters of the "old order", as the political system of the Sukarno administration is now officially called, the leaders of the new

* Sukarno, who was under house arrest, died on June 21, 1970 in a Djakarta military hospital.

regime invariably accuse them of bringing the country to the brink of economic and political disaster. At this juncture it should be noted that actual authority in the centre and the provinces prior to September 30, 1965, was to a large extent wielded by the same military officials who are wielding it today and who are mainly responsible for the difficulties facing the country today, in contrast to the progressive forces whose political activity and independence in conditions of "guided democracy" were restricted to a very considerable degree.

It is clear to Indonesia's present-day rulers that the new regime will be unable to remain in power unless effective steps are taken to stabilise the economy. Indonesian industry, finance and agriculture are in a state of decline unprecedented both in scale and duration. The cost of the Indonesian rupiah depreciated by 100,000 times in relation to the dollar from 1950 to 1967, which is a world record in inflation.

In just two years (1965-67) prices have multiplied by a factor of eight. According to figures released by the Association of Moslem Trade Unions of Indonesia (Gabungan Sarikat Buruh Islam Indonesia or GASBIINDO) the monthly subsistence minimum for a family of five in the beginning of 1968 was Rp. 15,900, whereas the actual average income of a state employee was Rp. 2,000 and only some people employed by oil companies received up to Rp. 7,500 a month.

The national industry, including its state sector, is still stagnant and the Government is unable to give it any perceptible assistance. Agriculture cannot meet the population's needs for food: with an annual requirement for rice of not less than

13 million tons, the harvest of this staple crop was only 10,700,000 tons in 1970. The difference is partly imported. Transport is in an extremely dire state: most of the locomotives and motor vehicles are in disrepair and so are the permanent way and communication facilities.

Tackling these problems the Indonesian Government is concentrating mainly on involving foreign capital, both in the form of credits, loans and "aid", and in the form of direct investments by monopolies of leading Western powers. Before soliciting foreign aid the Government returned the property nationalised in the period from 1960 to 1965 to the United States, British and Dutch monopolies, promulgated legislation sanctioning foreign capital investments (December 1966) and the operation of foreign banks in the country (December 1967), and passed a number of acts and resolutions granting privileges to foreign companies and banks. According to official data, by the end of 1968, the Government had allowed foreign companies to invest approximately \$400 million in the Indonesian economy; by the end of 1969, this figure had increased to almost \$800 million. The greatest activity is displayed by US firms, who are followed by firms of Japan, West Germany, the Netherlands and other countries.

By the end of May 1970, the Indonesian Government had allowed foreigners to invest a total of \$1,339,900,000 in the Indonesian economy. Almost 80 per cent of this sum is being invested into the mining industry, fisheries and forest exploitation, that is, into branches yielding raw materials and foodstuffs which are in short supply in the developed capitalist countries and whose long-term development in effect does nothing towards

helping Indonesia to attain genuine economic independence.

By December 1968, sixteen foreign banks were granted permission to open branches in Djakarta, including five US banks, three Dutch, two British and one from each of the following countries: West Germany, South Korea, France, Thailand, Japan and the Philippines.

In 1966, Indonesia's capitalist creditors formed the so-called Tokyo Consortium, consisting of the United States, Britain, France, the Netherlands, Japan, West Germany, Australia, Belgium and Italy. Taking advantage of the fact that already at the time Indonesia's total debt to these countries was about \$1,300 million, its Western creditors have turned this association into a means of directly controlling its economy. This, naturally, has an impact on Indonesian policy, all the more so since the size and the terms of the new credits are fixed at the annual meetings of the Consortium.

It cannot be denied that such a massive introduction of foreign capital and the sufficiently large credits have in some measure stabilised prices on essential goods and slowed down the inflation. At the same time the absorption of the Indonesian economy by Western monopolies gives rise to fresh problems and contradictions not only of an economic but also of a social nature. Unemployment is mounting. Unable to stand up to competition from Western companies and banks, national enterprise is fading out of the picture.

Thus the interests of the new regime clash not only with the interests of the working people, but also with those of the national bourgeoisie and to some extent of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which would like to capitalise upon the plundered wealth.

The situation in the countryside is likewise pregnant with conflicts. The Indonesian weekly *Ampera Review* wrote on January 13, 1968: "Many peasants who had been given land in various parts of Java, have been deprived of it. The situation is the worst in the area of Krawang (Western Java) where not less than 80 per cent of the land turned over to the landless peasants has once again been seized by its former owners. On the island of Bali, the peasants who have been given land do not till it fearing repressions on the part of those who regard the redistributed land as a gift by the Communist Party of Indonesia."

The policy of the current regime creates serious socio-political problems. The unprecedented scope of white terror during and after the coup d'état of 1965-66 evoked widespread indignation in all countries. Besides the hundreds of thousands of murdered and tortured Communists and other democrats, many thousands have been thrown into prisons and concentration camps, and their families (and that means additional hundreds of thousands of people), have neither jobs, nor political rights, nor the means of subsistence. The foremost representatives of the progressive national intelligentsia—scientists, engineers and particularly students who have studied in socialist countries, teachers and cultural workers—have been victimised. As a result, a fairly large stratum of political outcasts has appeared. The political course of the Indonesian Government, which has elevated militant anti-communism to the status of official policy, impedes the solution of the long-standing socio-political problem.

The July 3, 1971 elections brought victory to the government political organisation called the SEKBER GOLKAR which won 236 parliamentary

seats out of 360 (with 100 deputies more to be nominated by the President from the Army). The results of the elections were due not only to the very rigid administrative and police control instituted by the authorities over the election campaign and the balloting, but also to the fact that the political parties were incapable of formulating their own positive programmes for resolving national problems. The runner-up in the elections was the Right-wing Muslim Nahdatul Ulama Party (58 seats) which campaigned under the slogan of restricting the Army's role in the country.

The removal from the political scene and the slaughter of the most organised section of the national patriotic forces have seriously impaired Indonesia's position in its relations with socialist and developing states. In the current situation the massive penetration of foreign capital into Indonesia's economy far from coming up against serious resistance, cannot even be controlled by the public. Consequently, as foreign monopolies strengthen their economic positions in the country, they also increase their influence on the political, spiritual and cultural life of Indonesian society. The influence of the overtly pro-imperialist circles is also mounting. Regarding the policy of the present regime as inconsistent, they demand that it be guided into a clearly-defined imperialist channel and that the Government enter into military alliances with the Western powers on an anti-communist platform.

Indonesia's domestic and foreign policies are in sharp contrast with the interests of the country's national-patriotic forces, which stand for the fight for economic and political independence, against imperialism and colonialism, for the development

of equal and mutually advantageous relations with all countries and for democratic reforms at home.

In its programme document "Urgent Tasks of the Communist Movement in Indonesia" (February 1969), the Marxist-Leninist group of the Communist Party of Indonesia, in addition to setting the task of re-establishing the Party on a Marxist-Leninist basis, freeing it from both Left and Right opportunism, particularly from the disastrous influence of Maoist agents, indicates the need to establish a national unity front on the basis of democratic demands and to form a democratic, anti-imperialist government.

THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines have attracted world attention on more than one occasion: Ferdinand Magellan, commander of the first expedition that circumnavigated the earth, died on the Philippines in 1521; in 1898, the Filipinos established Asia's first bourgeois republic, which was crushed by the United States imperialists. After that for over 40 years the islands were the only United States colony in Southeast Asia.

Situated at the approaches to Vietnam in the Pacific Ocean and at the crossing of sea routes between America and Southeast Asia, the Philippine Islands also form a natural bridge between China and Indonesia. Their advantageous geographical and military-strategic position did not pass unnoticed by the first Spanish conquerors, who turned the archipelago into their outpost in Asia. At the beginning of the 19th century the American imperialists used the islands as a base for their expansion into China. In the Second World War Japan turned the Philippines into a springboard for invading Indonesia. After the war the US imperialists set up a system of naval and air bases on the Philippine Islands turning them into their stronghold in the Far East.

Of the more than 7,000 islands and islets, forming the Philippine Archipelago, only 740 are hab-

itable. Ninety-four per cent of the country's territory, approximately 300,000 sq km, are occupied by 11 islands: Luzon, Mindanao, Samar, Negros, Palawan, Panay, Mindoro, Leyte, Cebu, Bohol and Masbate. About half the 37,000,000 inhabitants of the country live on Luzon; here on the shore of Manila Bay stands Manila, the country's biggest city and its economic, political, cultural and social centre (the population of greater Manila is 2,500,000). The Philippines have the world's highest growth rate of population, 3.5 per cent a year and its density is 125 per sq km. Fifty-five per cent of the inhabitants are under 20 years of age.

Ethnically the majority of the population are descendants of Malayan tribes who sporadically settled on the islands in the course of several centuries. As a result some ninety different languages and dialects, of which the most important are Visayan, Tagalog and Ilocano, are spoken on the islands. Following the seizure of the islands by the United States, English became widespread in urban centres and is now the official language alongside Tagalog and Spanish.

The Philippines are the only state in Southeast Asia where almost the entire population are Christians: 83.8 per cent are Catholics, 9.1 per cent are Aglipayans (members of the Independent Church of the Philippines),* followers of Iglesia Ni Kristo, and Protestants. About 5 per cent (mainly the inhabitants of the southernmost areas of the Sulu Archipelago and the southwestern part of Mindanao) are Moslems. The small mountain tribes engaged in hunting and herb gathering are

* Named after Archbishop Gregorio Aglipay (1860-1941), the founder of the Independent Church.

animists. Twenty-five per cent of the population are illiterate.



Europeans "discovered" the Philippines in 1521 when Magellan's flotilla, in its search for islands of spices, came across an unknown archipelago which Magellan named Saint Lazarus Islands. The name Philippines was given to the islands in 1543 by Villalobos, head of another Spanish expedition, in honour of the heir to the Spanish throne, subsequently King Philip II. The final conquest of the Philippines took place in 1571 when Miguel Legazpi's conquistadores captured Manila and turned it into the capital of the new colony and a stronghold from where they continued subjugating the inhabitants of other parts of the country. In the wake of the soldiers hungering for spoils, the islands were flooded by monks. With the cross and sword they began to convert the heathen Indians, as the Spaniards called the local inhabitants, by association with American Indians, to Christianity.

For a long time the Spaniards kept the Philippines closed to the outside world by forcibly severing the once lively commercial ties with numerous Asian countries. The decrepit Spanish monarchy exploited the Philippines with the help of obsolete semi-feudal methods and it was only the expansion of European and American commercial capital in the 19th century that somewhat stimulated the growth of capitalist relations in the colony.

In 1896, the Filipinos rose up in arms against the Spanish colonialists, smashed the hated colonial yoke and in 1898 set up the first Philippine republic, with the most democratic constitution of

those times. But its existence was shortlived. Young US imperialism emerged on the world arena and unleashed the first war for the redivision of the world. Its first victims were the Philippines and Cuba, two former Spanish colonies. In his *Letter to American Workers* Lenin vehemently condemned the new imperialist beast which "throttled the Philippines in 1898 on the pretext of liberating them. . . ."* Unwilling to give in to the new colonialists, the Filipinos waged a guerilla war for several years after the United States had seized the islands.

The economy established in the Philippines in the more than 40 years of the US colonial domination was fully dependent on the United States of America. The islands were turned into a source of agricultural and mineral raw materials for the US market. Capitalist relations developed very slowly and acquired a deformed colonial pattern, and the local national capital was weak.

As a result of the national liberation struggle which entered a new stage following the establishment, in November 1930, of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the United States Government in 1934 promised to grant the Philippines independence upon the termination of a ten-year "transitional" or "autonomous" period. In 1935, a constitution of autonomous Philippines was approved, and in the same year a government was established, headed by Manuel Quezon who was chairman of the bourgeois-landowner Nationalist Party or Party of Nationalists formed at the outset of the US colonial regime on the islands. In fact, however, power was concentrated entirely in the hands of the US High Com-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 63.

missioner, and North American monopolies controlled the country's economy.

Following the outbreak of the Second World War, in December 1941, the Japanese Army invaded the Philippines. All political parties and trade unions, whatever their programmes, were proclaimed dissolved. Many leaders of the Communist and working class movement perished in Japanese jails, among them Chairman of the Communist Party Chrisanto Evangelista and his deputy Pedro Abad Santos. The Communist Party proved to be the sole political organisation on the islands capable of organising all patriots for the struggle for the country's independence. On March 29, 1942, it formed a large resistance organisation, the guerilla Hukbalahap* about 10,000 strong which became the main force in the fight for liberation. It played an important part in routing the Japanese occupation troops and the Communist Party gained national recognition.

In October 1943, the Japanese turned the former US colony into an "independent" Philippine republic as a component part of the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere" under Japan's aegis. The republic existed up to February 1945, when the Japanese were chased out of the Philippine capital Manila. The remnants of the routed Japanese army downed arms only after Japan had signed unconditional surrender on September 2, 1945.

*

The upsurge of the patriotic movement on the Philippines and the post-war international situation forced the US imperialists to grant the Phil-

* Short for Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon, which in Tagalog means People's Anti-Japanese Army.

ippines the long-promised political independence. The birth of the Philippine republic took place in an extremely involved and tense situation. Military operations on the Philippines and four years of Japanese occupation had greatly undermined the country's economy. Factories had been wrecked, mines and fields abandoned and houses demolished. Prices of food and essential goods were sky high. Eighteen months after liberation the general economic index was barely a third of the pre-war level, a fifth in the manufacturing industry and a bare one-fiftieth in the mining industry.

Such was the situation in the country when on July 4, 1946, it was announced that the United States had relinquished its sovereignty over the Philippines. Throughout the forty years of its colonial domination America had been preparing the ground for subjecting the new state to the interests of United States imperialism. Legislative and executive bodies of the Philippine republic were patterned along US lines. Legislative power is exercised by a Congress which consists of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The president, elected for a four-year term by all citizens who reached the age of 21 is head of the cabinet of ministers and has extensive powers, including the right to veto laws passed by the Congress.

The United States maintains its political, economic, military and ideological control over the Philippines with the help of "special" relations between the two countries. The privileges enjoyed by the United States on the islands have made Philippine independence largely fictitious. A primary condition for granting the former colony independence was the conclusion in 1946 of the

Philippine-US Trade Agreement under which the Philippines were obliged to amend their constitution to guarantee US firms parity rights in exploiting the natural resources and owning municipal services. Philippine citizens do not have similar rights in the United States. This agreement provided for free trade between the two countries up to July 4, 1954, and quotas for the principal items of Philippine exports sold on the US market. Moreover, the Philippines were forced to accept a fixed exchange rate of two pesos for US \$ 1, which tied the country to the United States market and prevented it from expanding trade with other countries. Owing to the artificially high exchange rate of the peso, the prices on Philippine goods on the world market were higher than prices for similar goods from other countries. North American companies were allowed to take unlimited amounts of the capital derived from the exploitation of the people of the Philippines out of the country. The agreement, therefore, greatly limited the country's economic sovereignty and consolidated the pre-war status of US monopoly capital in the Philippine economy.

On March 14, 1947, the Philippine and US Governments signed the 99-year Military Bases Agreement under which the United States was granted the use of 23 military bases in the Philippines, and on March 21, 1947, the two Governments concluded the Mutual Assistance Agreement which placed the Philippine Armed Forces under the control of US advisers. Power was left in the hands of representatives of the reactionary pro-American bloc of the landowners and the wealthy bourgeoisie, headed by Manuel Roxas. Shortly before the elections Manuel Roxas left the National-

ist Party and formed the Liberal Party. Over the years these two political organisations were the only major parties in the country which replaced one another at the helm of state.

In the first years following the establishment of the republic, the Communist Party, which had legal status, achieved considerable progress in its struggle to win over the masses. It won the support of a section of the intellectuals and students, and participated in the leadership with the patriotic bourgeoisie of the Democratic Alliance*—the organisation of the united national front—and also became the head of the Hukbalahap Veterans' League, consisting of former Hukbalahap guerillas, who had fought against the Japanese occupation forces and still had a considerable quantity of arms at their disposal.

The first years were marked by increased activity and consciousness of the working class and also by the growth of the Communist Party's influence on its organisations. The Congress of Labour Organisations, a major progressive trade union centre, established in July 1945, organised a series of successful strikes. Frequently the strikers' demands were not only economic, but anti-imperialist in character. The Congress united trade unions operating on Luzon, economically the most advanced region of the Philippines. From 1946 to 1948 its membership increased from 80,000 to 100,000. There were also other large

* Established in June 1945, by the bourgeois patriotic organisation Alliance of Civilian Freedoms. By the beginning of 1946, the Democratic Alliance embraced all progressive patriotic organisations of various sections of the population, including the Communist Party, Hukbalahap, National Peasants' Union, Congress of Labour Organisations and the Philippine Labour Federation.

trade unions in the country. The Philippine Labour Federation with a membership of about 70,000 resumed its activity on Visayan Islands. All told, there were 237 registered trade unions in the country by the end of 1946. The Communist Party, whose ranks had substantially swelled during the war, played a decisive role in the Congress of Labour Organisations and the National Peasants' Union, a major peasants' organisation uniting 300,000 peasants of Central Luzon, the country's principal rice-growing area.

The workers' and peasants' movement developed in conditions of a steadily mounting national liberation movement and military successes of the Hukbalahap, which threw the ruling circles into panic. The Government decided to resort to repressions against former Hukbalahap guerillas, demanded that they should immediately surrender arms and refused to carry out democratic reforms. For two years the Communist Party and the Hukbalahap leadership endeavoured to negotiate with the Government and the latter's refusal to accept their sound proposals resulted in civil war which broke out in 1948. Forced to go underground the Communist Party proclaimed a course of seizing power by force of arms. The Huks formed the Liberation Army (Hukbong Maqpapalaya ng Bayan) which went into action against government troops. But the Communist Party's appeal for armed struggle was not upheld by the people because it has set itself the goal of deposing the national government immediately after the Philippines had won political independence.

Instituting a reign of police terror, the Government of Elpidio Quirino mounted an offensive against the democratic forces. In 1948, it banned

the Hukbalahap, the Communist Party and the National Peasants' Union and then in 1951 outlawed the Congress of Labour Organisations, after subjecting it to repeated repressions. Differences over the principal forms of struggle for national and social emancipation led to the disintegration of the Democratic Alliance. A large army, equipped with US weapons and trained by US advisers was hurled against the Liberation Army. Prominent Communist Party functionaries were thrown into prisons. A vicious campaign to whip up anti-communist hysteria was launched. From 1950 to 1954, there was a series of trials of Filipino patriots charged with communist activities. Relying on extensive US military and financial assistance, the government troops had, by the autumn of 1951, smashed the courageously resisting main forces of the Liberation Army. The command of the guerilla struggle was decentralised and military operations were continued by detachments scattered in the mountain regions. In these circumstances the Communist Party acknowledged its hopes for a swift victory in the armed struggle unrealistic and concentrated on winning over the masses. In 1956, the command of the Liberation Army dissolved the surviving detachments and only retained armed groups to protect the activists.

Frightened by the course of developments in the country, the Philippine Government became party to the SEATO bloc. The treaty establishing this organisation was signed in Manila in 1954.

Besides the policy of repressions against democratic organisations, Quirino's administration took steps to split up the working-class movement, invigorate reformism and set up anti-communist

trade unions. For more than a decade these conciliatory trade unions dominated the working-class movement. There was a particularly sharp rise in their number following the promulgation, in 1953, of the Industrial Peace Act which allowed the working people to set up trade unions but outlawed any form of political struggle, qualifying it as "communist subversive activity", and imposed restrictions on the strike movement. A tremendous part in the organisation of anti-communist trade unions was played by the Catholic Church which in 1950 set up the pseudo-trade-union Federation of Free Workers and in 1953 the Federation of Free Farmers. Headed by Jesuits, the Federation of Free Workers concentrated on preventing strikes and on "peace between labour and capital" propaganda. In 1970, the Federation of Free Workers included about 100 trade unions with a total of 30,000 members. It is a member of the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) and the Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unions and is generously financed by the Jesuit Order and certain reactionary organisations in the United States. For ten years the Federation of Free Farmers was the only relatively large peasant organisation, (at the end of the 60s it united some 90,000 peasants, leaseholders and labourers, most of whom lived on Luzon). The Federation spread reformist illusions among the working peasants to avert any peasant action against the landowners and uproot the influence of Communists in the countryside. The Federation leadership is playing up "harmony between the landowner and peasants" and condemns strikes and other active forms of struggle. Yet, despite considerable financial assistance from the Government, the Catholic Church and the US Interna-

tional Co-operation Administration, the Federation is losing its popularity and its membership is falling off.

In 1954, the Asian Labour Educational Centre was set up in Manila, with US financial assistance, for the express purpose of training functionaries acceptable to the top officials in the trade unions. In the beginning of the sixties the Centre opened its doors to trade union leaders from other Southeast Asian countries. The principal objective of this Centre is to introduce ideas of "class co-operation" into the trade union movement of the Asian countries. In the first ten years of its existence about 25,000 people from these countries underwent training at the Centre.

Determined to split the working class movement, the Philippine Government established the National Confederation of Trade Unions, which it controls and whose leadership consists of government officials and businessmen. At the same time the Government continued its witch-hunt: in 1957, the Congress passed the notorious RA 1700 Anti-Subversion Law under which persons can be charged with treason and sentenced to death for being members of the Communist Party or any other banned progressive organisation. A fresh wave of arrests of prominent Communists followed. In this reign of terror, the Communist Party went deeper underground where its ranks continued to grow in number and strength. The new Party leadership suspended the armed struggle and concentrated on spreading Marxist-Leninist ideas among the working people and intellectuals. It also focussed its activity on ensuring unity of action of all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal forces in the struggle for genuine independence and democracy.

The late fifties witnessed a gradual revival of the national forces, following a prolonged lull caused by the rout of the main forces of the Communist Party, the Hukbalahap and other democratic, workers' and peasants' organisations. Assuming leadership of the national liberation movement a group of patriots consisting of representatives of the national bourgeoisie and intellectuals organised a nationalist movement under the slogan "Pilipino muña" (Filipino First) directed against the domination of foreign capital. The late Senator Claro Recto, a patriot and implacable enemy of United States imperialism, became the movement's recognised leader. The main objective of the national liberation struggle was to abolish the country's economic, military and political dependence on the United States. On the eve of the 1957 presidential elections, Claro Recto's group withdrew from the ruling Nationalist Party and in conjunction with Senator Lorenzo Tañada's adherents formed the National Citizen's Party. Enjoying authority with intellectuals and a section of the bourgeoisie, but lacking a mass basis it disappeared fairly rapidly from the political scene. As regards the Filipino First movement, it won new supporters among workers' trade unions and youth organisations. Although the movement began to decline following Claro Recto's death it, nevertheless, left its mark on the national liberation movement. In subsequent years its anti-Americanism became rooted in broad sections of the population.

The general upsurge of the national liberation struggle was reflected in the invigoration of the workers' and peasants' movement, and several attempts were made to unite the trade union centres. In 1957, 12 leading trade union associations merged

to form the Philippine Congress of Political Actions which, however, soon disintegrated. In 1959, fourteen major trade union associations with more than 100,000 members formed the Union of Filipino Workers (Katipunang Manggagawang Pilipino). Its inaugural meeting adopted a resolution demanding the dismantling of the US bases on the Philippine territory. The Union of Filipino Workers likewise proved unstable due to internal contradictions in its leadership and a number of large trade unions withdrew from it. Finally, in 1963, the country's biggest trade unions, in conjunction with other progressive organisations, formed the Labour Party (Lapiang Manggagawa), renamed Socialist Party in 1967. Its leadership consists of radical intellectuals.

The establishment of the Labour Party was a milestone in the development of the working class and trade union movement. The Party programme sets the task of achieving economic independence and eradicating feudal survivals in the countryside. In the sphere of the working-class and trade-union movement it upholds the workers' right to strike. But since the end of the sixties the Party leadership and the leadership of the most democratic trade union organisation—the National Association of Trade Unions—have come under the influence of a group of Maoists who are using these organisations to introduce Maoist ideas into the Philippine working class movement.

By the beginning of the seventies an estimated 10 per cent of the total number of workers were united into 4,000 trade unions.* The biggest centres, each uniting several trade unions, are the

* *Labour and Manpower Development in the Philippines*, Manila, 1970, p. 3.

Philippine Trade Union Council, a member of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the National Association of Trade Unions which is a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the Federation of Free Workers.

The peasants' movement also began to revive. In 1964, for the first time since the defeat of the insurgent movement, a progressive peasant organisation, called the Free Association of Peasants or MASAKA (Malayang Samahan ng mg Magasasaka), was established in the Philippines. By mid-1969 its membership totalled 20,000 peasants, leaseholders and labourers in Central Luzon. It supported the land reform law passed in 1963, and its programme clearly states that peasants' organisations must assume control over the enforcement of the agrarian reform. Another objective of the MASAKA is to form diversified peasants' co-operatives, as a measure to free the peasants from the clutches of money-lenders. The MASAKA maintains contacts with workers' trade unions and progressive youth organisations.

In 1967, representatives of the patriotic sections of the bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, and also members of Left-wing trade unions and peasants' organisations formed the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism, which put forward a programme of struggle for the country's economic, political and cultural independence and for the enforcement of democratic reforms. Today this organisation is one of the principal forces fighting for the national interests of the Filipinos. By mid-1969, it had a membership of 120,000.

Thus, the upsurge of the national liberation movement is manifested by a number of large-

scale demonstrations staged by workers, peasants and young people with the participation of intellectuals and organisations of the national bourgeoisie. The opposition forces demand that the Philippine Government should uphold national interests more resolutely, abolish the "parity rights" granted to American businessmen in the Philippines, and take steps to have the US military bases on the islands dismantled. Ever more often the demonstrators demand the initiation of social reforms which is a manifestation of the mounting general discontent with the growth of unemployment, economic instability, rising prices, and the spread of corruption in the government apparatus.

The Philippine public deserves great praise for securing the release, after almost 20 years of incarceration, of a large group of political prisoners, including former General Secretary of the Communist Party Jose Lava, a prominent figure in the national liberation movement and author of works on the theory and history of the communist movement on the Philippines. And the decision of the Philippine Government to withdraw its troops from South Vietnam must be regarded as a concession to public demand.

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The Republic of the Philippines is one of a group of states which gained political independence after the Second World War but which have retained close links with imperialist countries and are still economically dependent on them.

Although the republic is advancing along the capitalist road, the capitalist mode of production is by no means predominant. To this day it has various modes of production characteristic of

various levels of capitalist development (from manufactories to large-scale machine industry), feudalism, patriarchal slave-owning and primitive communal relations.

Having won political independence, the Philippines acquired important pre-requisites for independent development and the opportunity of employing natural and manpower resources in the national interests. But a number of internal and external factors stand in the way. The principal internal obstacles blocking economic development are the agrarian problem, shortage of capital for investment in the economy and an inadequate mobilisation of capital from internal sources. This, in turn, has created other difficulties, which, to a large extent, the republic has been unable to overcome to this day. The most outstanding issue is chronic unemployment: ten per cent of the total labour force is constantly unemployed. Another acute problem is that of training national personnel. It is a paradox that while unemployment is highest among the intellectuals, including engineers and other technical personnel, there is an acute shortage of trained specialists for the economy. The lack of co-ordination between the training and the employment of the national personnel has led to a brain drain which has taken on disastrous proportions.

An analysis of the distribution of the national income almost 25 years since the republic has won political independence shows that the Philippines have remained a weakly-developed agrarian state. In 1970, for example, a third of the national income came from agriculture and only a fifth from industrial production.

The agrarian structure of the economy is suffering the calamitous consequences of its backward-

ness and the resulting difficulties on the world market. The urgent task of reviving and modernising the economy requires funds to expand industrialisation and strengthen bourgeois enterprise. The narrow industrial base prevents the introduction of even the smallest changes in the country's economic structure. Agriculture is still the principal sector of the national economy, and its main trend is farming: 70 per cent of the cultivated area is sown to food crops such as rice, corn and root crops for domestic consumption and the rest is under coconut palms, sugar cane, abacá and tobacco which are export crops. The cultivation of food crops is characterised by the most backward productive forces, and the relations of production have the greatest survivals from the feudal period.

In an attempt to change the agrarian system, to convert the semi-feudal agricultural production to capitalist lines the Government undertook a series of measures which are known in the Philippines by the names of the Presidents who signed laws authorising those agricultural reforms—the land reforms of Magsaysay (1954-57) and Macapagal (1962-65). The latter reform envisages expansion of capitalist credits to petty producers, the purchase of landed estates which are leased by their owners and their transfer to the direct producers, resettlement of landless peasants from regions with acute land hunger to state-owned virgin lands, and, finally, the prohibition of *métayagé* in the cultivation of rice and corn where it has become the main form of production relations. In effect, however, this reform is progressing at an extremely slow pace. By mid-1968, that is five years after the adoption of the law, only 80,000 out of 600,000 *métayer* households were included in the

so-called "land reform areas".* In Pampanga Province in Central Luzon, the rice-producing centre of the country where 90 per cent of the peasants are petty métayers, leaseholders still give away over 50 per cent of the harvest as land rent, although under the 1963 law it had been lowered to 25 per cent of the average annual harvest. By the beginning of 1970, the Government had released only 13 million pesos out of the 600 million scheduled for the purchase of landed estates.**

The establishment of a national industry encountered numerous difficulties, since the republic has no engineering base and the national bourgeoisie lacks the necessary currency resources. The absence of technical know-how called for the immediate reorganisation of the methods of training national personnel. The Philippines' economic dependence on the United States completely frustrates the efforts of the national bourgeoisie to protect themselves from competition by controlling imports. It is natural, therefore, that the country is doing everything in its power to break away from this dependence.

The main external factor blocking the road to independent economic development is the Philippines' "special" relationship with the United States, established with the conclusion of economic agreements between the two countries. The 1946 Trade Agreement, which the Philippines signed as a precondition for independence, and the Laurel-Langley Agreement (called after the heads

* H. Spence, *Marcos of the Philippines*, New York, 1969, p. 342.

** *The Sunday Times Magazine*, Manila, Jan. 11, 1970, p. 18.

of the Philippine and US delegations who signed it) which replaced the 1946 Agreement in 1956, not only determined the one-sided trend in the republic's foreign economic relations, but helped preserve the colonial structure of its economy. In exchange for certain privileges on the US market granted to the Philippines under the new agreement, the US capital extended its "parity rights" to all spheres of the Philippine economy, in violation of the republic's constitution. Both agreements led to the enrichment of the wealthy "old" bourgeoisie, closely connected with US monopoly capital, and the consolidation of their political authority. At the same time the agreements prevented the "new" industrial bourgeoisie from expanding its economic and political positions. The struggle for the abrogation of these agreements, therefore, became the focal point of the anti-imperialist fight to uproot colonialism, which is impeding independent economic development.

The exploitation of the Philippines by US capital is not diminishing since non-equivalent exchange is expanding and US monopoly capital is entitled to "parity rights" and other privileges on a par with national capital. In this connection the former Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives Manuel S. Enverga declared in parliament: "When we granted parity rights, tax exemption and other privileges to American citizens, we did practically sell the future of our country."*

According to the University of the Philippines, foreign capital (chiefly United States capital) holds key positions in strategic sectors of the

* M. Enverga, *The Philippine Foreign Policy, A Study in Confusion and Subservience*, Lucena City, 1969, p. 86.

economy. It controls, among others, oil refineries, gold, silver and iron ore mines, the manufacture of tyres and rubber goods, and medicines. Today, according to US sources, "twenty-four of the fifty biggest enterprises in the Philippines are American owned, and represent an over-all American investment of about \$ 900 million".*

Examining the position of foreign capital in the Philippine economy, Professor Niceto Poblador of the University of the Philippines came to the following conclusion: "Because of the political influence which attaches to the tremendous economic power of these foreign corporations, vital policies of this Nation have been so framed as to reflect and support the vital interests of the foreign business community to the pervasive detriment of our national interest."**

That is why for the past 25 years the question of foreign capital, particularly US capital, has been an extremely acute issue for the Philippines, as for any other developing country with a very narrow financial base. The parliamentary debates on allowing the entry of foreign capital, the forms of its application, its ratio to the national capital, methods of stimulating foreign investments into key branches of economy, and the terms on which they should be allowed, have reflected the views of the different classes and sections of the Philippine society. For more than ten years bills concerning foreign capital have been discussed in Congress. Finally, at its 1968 winter session the Philippine parliament passed the Investment Incentives Act of 1967 which

* *Fortune*, New York, July 1969, vol. 81, p. 120.

** *The Manila Times*, July 15, 1968, p. 16-a.

reflected the balance of forces in the ruling clique. The act defined the government policy with regard to private capital, both national and foreign. Companies which helped develop key branches of the economy were exempt from taxation and entitled to preferential tariffs and other privileges. With certain exceptions, national capital must control 60 per cent of the shares of these companies. The greatest privileges were granted to branches which turned out goods for export, or those which replaced imported commodities. The law contained provisions for encouraging foreign investments. At the same time it limited the sphere of application and participation of foreign capital. In keeping with the law preference was given to foreign loans over direct investments. A year later the Congress passed amendments imposing further restrictions on foreign capital. Now the establishment of mixed companies with 30 per cent foreign participation has to be sanctioned by the Board of Investment. The adoption of this law has undoubtedly been a major victory for the progressive forces in their struggle for economic independence.

Representatives of the Philippine national bourgeoisie in Congress are also demanding privileges for national capital in the credit sphere. They insist on limiting the crediting of foreign companies from internal financial resources for this seriously affects local enterprises which are continually short of credits. In the years 1964-67 alone, for instance, Philippine banks had granted credits to the value of over 1,000 million pesos to foreign firms.* But bills on nation-

* See *The Manila Times*, 1968, July 15, p. 15-a.

alising crediting have not yet even been considered by the Lower House of Congress.

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The structure of the Philippine society reflects the characteristics of the economic development, with as many classes and strata as there are modes of production. The low level of capitalist development in the colonial period and its slow progress in the independent Philippines resulted in the numerical superiority of classes and strata typical of the pre-capitalist and petty-commodity modes of production. The classes and strata of capitalist society (bourgeoisie, officials, intellectuals, engineering and administrative personnel, and the proletariat) make up a small percentage of the population. The foundations of society consist as before of representatives of the petty-capitalist, petty-commodity and semi-natural modes of production (peasants, urban lower strata—petty proprietors, tradesmen, hired craftsmen and manufactory workers and so forth). The numerically small class of wealthy landowners, who do not engage in farming themselves, continues to retain firm political positions.

In 1967, the Philippine labour force numbered an estimated 13 million persons. Of these 12.1 million were employed, 57 per cent working in agriculture, fishing and forestry; 12.6 per cent in industry, mainly in small establishments or in cottage industries; 8.2 per cent were in the personal services; 6.6 per cent were salesmen and related employees; 4.2 per cent were owners of small retail establishments, officials or administrators; 3.6 per cent were professionals, 3.4 per cent clerical workers, 2.6 per cent transport workers and employees; 1.4 per cent itinerant man-

ual labourers, 0.1 per cent miners and 0.8 per cent had unreported occupations.*

The class of Philippine landowners who today own huge estates, developed from the *caciques*, lower officials of the Spanish colonial administration, who seized peasant and communal lands. Its second branch emerged at the close of the 18th-beginning of the 19th century from the wealthy Chinese metis who acquired land by various means. Under the United States rule, the families of powerful landowners supplied the officials for the colonial administration and the close relations which were established in that way between the upper officials and the landowner class have been preserved to this day.

The formation of the other ruling class, the "old" bourgeoisie also took place in the colonial period, mainly under the US rule. During the period of Spanish domination the restrictions imposed on the participation of the non-Spanish population of the colony in domestic and foreign trade prevented the rise of large-scale commercial capital. It began to accumulate in the hands of the Chinese metis and some "Indio" landowners, only in the latter half of the 19th century, when the country was opened to foreigners and the monopoly on domestic trade was lifted. But here, too, the foreigners seized the initiative, while the local bourgeoisie engaged mainly in brokerage, and confined its industrial activities to the primary processing of agricultural products for export. By virtue of its activities the "old" Philippine bourgeoisie became closely associated with and dependent on US capital, on

* *Overseas Business Reports*, Washington, 1968, Nos. 68-74, pp. 14-15.

the one hand, and concerned with preserving feudal survivals in the economy, on the other, owing to its close ties with the feudal-landowners class. Between the First and the Second World Wars the wealthy brokers, forming a section of the bourgeoisie, considerably strengthened their economic and political positions. Following the establishment of the Republic of the Philippines in 1946 they came to power together with the landowners.

The Second World War and the achievement of independence by the Philippines stimulated the growth of the national industrial and banking bourgeoisie, the "new" bourgeoisie, growing in economic and political strength and lusting for power. Needless to say they would have preferred to engage in the more profitable export trade of traditional commodities, but this is still the preserve of the two old groups of the ruling élite, who derive all the benefits of free trade on the US market. As a result, the new bourgeoisie is searching for new markets in Europe, including the socialist countries. It is this section of the bourgeoisie, which is demanding an end to the "special" relations with the United States and the abolition of the "parity" rights of US capital in the Philippines. The new bourgeoisie object to "special" relations with the United States because they impede their activities. The "parity" rights of US citizens make it impossible for the products of national enterprises to compete even on the Philippine market. It is true, however, that control over imports and currency instituted in the fifties (in the so-called period of "controlled economy") artificially stimulated the growth of national production through the introduction of customs barriers, higher duties and a ban on the

export of currency. But when in the sixties the Philippines went over to the economic policy of "decontrol", including the removal of control on imports and foreign currency (not without pressure from US companies in the Philippines), it was a serious blow at the interests of the new bourgeoisie and served to intensify the struggle within the ruling group. Although still a junior partner in the ruling group, the new bourgeoisie has managed to force the Government to take a series of measures designed to protect national capital. In 1970, the Philippines have, to a considerable extent, re-established control over imports and foreign currency.

Today the Left wing of the national bourgeoisie guides the national liberation movement which accounts for its anti-American character. At the current stage of the anti-imperialist struggle it is coming out as a conscious spokesman for the common national aspirations while still upholding its own class interests. The patriotic demands of the national bourgeoisie mirror the anti-imperialist aspirations of the masses and for the most part coincide with the interests of the majority of the population. The demands for a revision of the "special" relations with the United States, primarily in the economic sphere, advanced by the new bourgeoisie, have the support of all those taking part in the national liberation movement, namely the Left-wing of the bourgeoisie, intellectuals, democratic organisations of workers, peasants and young people.

On the whole, the Philippine intellectuals have a petty-bourgeois ideology taking only the demand for national independence from the proletarian ideology. They take part in the bourgeois-democratic nationalist movement with a

programme of political and economic independence under a bourgeois system, and favour the establishment of their own bourgeoisie or "middle class", believing that a powerful middle class will be able to bring the Philippines out of its economic backwardness and dependence. Their views were inspired by the late Senator Claro Recto. The majority of the intellectuals, particularly lecturers at the University of the Philippines, are honest bourgeois patriots. Since the end of the sixties part of the intelligentsia, chiefly students, have come under the influence of a group of Maoists. This circumstance is proving to be very detrimental to the country's democratic forces and impedes the establishment of a united anti-imperialist and anti-feudal front.

The peasants, numerically the largest class of the Philippine society and the biggest contingent of the anti-imperialist front, are not at present a united social force. The majority of the peasants are land-hungry or landless *métayers*, and by their property status they are semi-proletarians. There is fairly large stratum of time-workers and seasonal agricultural labourers but only a small section of these belongs to the agricultural working class. By stimulating the rise of capitalism in the countryside, land reforms and other government measures tend to enlarge the strata of proprietors coming from the wealthier peasants and the landowners running their farms and estates on capitalist lines. With the gradual enforcement of the 1963 land reform some of the *métayers* entitled to land may swell the ranks of the middle peasants who are not too numerous as yet; it is also possible that these measures might lead to a growth in the number of wealthy farmers. But judging by the slow progress of the

land reform it is doubtful whether the structure of the peasantry will change in the near future.

The Philippine working class, which together with the peasants, forms the principal mainstay of the national liberation movement, does not stand at its head and so far has not separated its class interests from the interests of the nation as a whole. At one time the working class, assisted by the Communist Party, took part in guiding the liberation struggle. This happened in the first post-war years when the Communist Party representatives were among the leadership of the Democratic Alliance. Since the capitalist mode of production plays a small part in the economy, the working class is also small and scattered in numerous small and medium-size enterprises, and the majority of the workers maintain close links with the villages. The development of class solidarity and consciousness among the workers is impeded by the traditions of rural community which are binding on both the exploiters and the exploited. The Filipino workers support the common national struggle for independence, but do not play a leading part, because of their socio-political immaturity and inadequate organisation. It should be noted, however, that the development of the capitalist mode of production, which took place after the Philippines became independent, altered the structure of the working class and increased the number of workers employed in the machine industry. The political and class consciousness of the workers has also grown. This is borne out by the mounting strike movement, the participation of workers in anti-imperialist demonstrations and in drives against poverty undertaken jointly with other progressive organisations.

Thus, in the 25 years of the Philippines' political independence certain changes have taken place in the balance of forces both between individual classes and within the classes themselves. The growing national bourgeoisie has strengthened its economic and political positions. The working class has grown in numbers and its structure is gradually changing. The peasantry, numerically the biggest class in the country, is also coming under the growing influence of developing capitalist relations. As regards the wealthy landowners, they are being drawn further and further into capitalist production.

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Confronted with the growing anti-American feeling among the widest sections of the population, the Philippine ruling circles had no option but to revise their traditional foreign policy of "blindly following in the wake of the United States". The "exemplary" friendship sealed by a range of agreements is cracking. Discontent with the American policy is even being voiced by some top-ranking government officials, who are demanding a revision of the "special" relations between the Philippines and the United States. In an interview granted to the popular Philippine weekly *Graphic*, Manuel S. Enverga, the former Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, called for a revision of relations with the United States because everywhere there were "inequities in our relations with the US—economically, politically and military".* The same demand comes from Foreign Minister

* *Graphic*, February 19, 1969, p. 35.

Carlos Romulo, for many years Ambassador of the Philippines in the United States. Even President Ferdinand Marcos, who assured the US Government in September 1966, during his traditional visit to Washington, that the relations between his country and the United States would be "maintained on the basis of common ideas and interests, of mutual respect and consideration",* has had to come forward with statements about the need to review relations between the Philippines and the United States because of the widespread anti-American sentiments in his country. Delivering his State-of-the-Nation message to the last pre-election session of Congress on January 27, 1969, he made the following comment: "A drastic change in our foreign policy is necessary. For too long we have been trusting foreigners, unthinkingly accepting their beliefs and preconceptions along with their economic and military domination. From now on our foreign policy will be dictated by our own national interest. . . . Our principal problem on foreign policy is to break out of the prison of old attitudes and outmoded habits of thought. New realities confront us. We must adjust to these realities."**

The acute need to expand the market for Philippine exports, the growth of anti-American sentiments and also the changes in the international situation have induced the Philippine Government to give up its policy of complete isolation from the countries of the socialist community. The *Graphic* expressed the views of the new generation of parliamentarians when it quoted Manuel S. Enverga's opinion: "... trade with the Socialist world

* *The Japan Times*, September 11, 1966.

** *Graphic*, February 19, 1969, p. 35.

would broaden the market for Filipino products and end once and for all the stranglehold of the Americans on our foreign trade.”*

The unequal position of the Philippines on the foreign market because of the non-equivalent exchange is being made worse by the scientific and technological revolution in the advanced countries, including the United States, which buy almost 50 per cent of Filipino exports. The expansion of economic co-operation with socialist countries would lessen the Philippines' currency and financial difficulties.

The first attempt to raise the question of re-examining the “rigid course” towards the USSR and other socialist countries was made in the Philippine parliament in 1964 by Salvador Lopez, Foreign Minister in the Macapagal administration. This cost Lopez his post. It was only three years later that the issue was raised again in official circles. In May 1967, the House of Representatives passed a bill authorising the establishment of the Special Committee to Re-examine Philippine National Policy towards Communist Countries, headed by Congressman Manuel S. Enverga. In July 1967, a mission led by Manuel S. Enverga went to socialist countries to study the possibilities of establishing relations with them. The trip was preceded by an open session of the Lower House, which was addressed, besides some Congressmen, by representatives of business circles and politicians who recommended the establishment of normal relations with socialist countries. But no further steps have been taken in this direction by the ruling circles. The reason evidently lies in the fact that President Marcos

* *Graphic*, August 21, 1968.

has given in to pressure from internal and foreign reaction, who are still scared of the bogey of communism and, in their fear of communism, are prepared to push national interests into the background. Marcos' position could be qualified as one of balancing between the forces of the national liberation movement and domestic and external reaction.

The manoeuvring of the Philippine ruling circles between US imperialism and the Philippine national liberation forces found its expression in the Vietnam question. Giving in to pressure from the US ruling circles the Philippine Government decided to join the US gamble in Vietnam. But the unprecedented growth of anti-American feelings among the widest sections of the population has forced the ruling élite to oppose further pressure from Washington. Having complied with the US demands to send Philippine troops to South Vietnam, President Marcos, nevertheless, turned down Washington's repeated requests to increase their numbers, in view of the serious discontent in the Islands, and towards the end of 1969 all Philippine forces, with the exception of the medical personnel, were withdrawn from South Vietnam.

Anti-American sentiments have taken a hold of a considerable portion of the Philippine population. Beginning in 1970, there has been a particularly large increase in the number of demonstrations of workers, peasants and young people demanding an end to US economic, military and political control. Nation-wide patriotic demonstrations in protest against the US neo-colonialist policy are developing into a struggle for the democratisation of society and social reforms. On March 17, 1970, tens of thousands of

working people came out into the streets of Manila to take part in the drive against poverty. The aggravation of social relations finds expression in the mounting strike movement of the workers. The area of social battles is expanding; now they are taking place not only in Manila but also in the provinces. A wave of mass demonstrations for better living conditions has swept the Iloilo Province on Panay Island, Palawan Island and the provinces of Zamboanga on Mindanao and Isabela on Luzon. As regards its impetus, and the number of people and territories involved, the current struggle of the working people for socio-democratic reforms is the biggest ever recorded in the history of Philippines.

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